

PARADISE LOST

A P O E M,

IN TWELVE BOOKS

WRITTEN BY

JOHN MILTON.

A new Edition, carefully corrected.

Τον περί Μῆσ' ἐφίλησε, δίδα δ' ἀγαθόν τε, κακόν τε,
'Οφθαλμῶν μὲν ἄμερσε, δίδα δ' ἠδᾶν ἀειδῆν.

HOMER Odyss. ②.

ALTENBURGH,
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PARADISE LOST.

BOOK I.

Of Man's first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world, and all our woe,
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man
Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,
Sing heav'nly Muse, that on the secret top
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire
That shepherd, who first taught the chosen seed,
In the beginning how the Heav'ns and Earth
Rose out of Chaos: Or if Sion hill
Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook that flow'd
Fast by the oracle of God; I thence
Invoke thy aid to my adventrous song,
That with no middle flight intends to soar
Above th' Aonian mount, while it pursues
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme:
And chiefly Thou O Spirit, that dost prefer
Before all temples th' upright heart and pure,
Instruct me, for Thou know'st; Thou from the first
Wast present, and with mighty wings out-spread
Dove-like sat'st brooding on the vast Abyss,
And mad'st it pregnant: what in me is dark
Illumine, what is low raise and support;
That to the height of this great argument
I may assert eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to Men.

Say first, for Heav'n hides nothing from thy view,
 Nor the deep tract of Hell, say first what cause
 Mov'd our grand parents, in that happy state,
 Favor'd of Heav'n so highly, to fall off 30
 From their creator, and transgress his will
 For one restraint, lords of the world besides?
 Who first seduc'd them to that foul revolt?
 Th' infernal Serpent! he it was, whose guile,
 Stirr'd up with envy and revenge, deceiv'd 35
 The mother of mankind, what time his pride
 Had cast him out from Heav'n, with all his host
 Of rebel Angels, by whose aid aspiring
 To set himself in glory above his peers,
 He trusted to have equal'd the most High, 40
 If he oppos'd; and with ambitious aim
 Against the throne and monarchy of God
 Rais'd impious war in Heav'n and battel proud
 With vain attempt. Him the almighty Power
 Hurl'd headlong flaming from th' ethereal sky, 45
 With hideous ruin and combustion, down
 To bottomless perdition; there to dwell
 In adamantin chains and penal fire,
 Who durst defie th' Omnipotent to arms.
 Nine times the space that measures day and night, 50
 To mortal men, with his horrid crew
 Lay vanquish'd, rolling in the fiery gulf,
 Confounded though immortal: But his doom
 Reserv'd him to more wrath; for now the thought
 Both of lost happiness and lasting pain, 55
 Torments him; round he throws his baleful eyes,
 That witness'd huge affliction and dismay,
 Mix'd with obdurate pride and stedfast hate;
 At once, as far as angels ken, he views
 The dismal situation waste and wild; 60
 A dungeon horrible, on all sides round
 As one great furnace flam'd, yet from those flames
 No light, but rather darkness visible
 Serv'd only to discover sights of woe;

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Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace 65
 And rest can never dwell; hope never comes
 That comes to all; but torture without end
 Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
 With ever-burning sulphur unconsum'd:
 Such place eternal Justice had prepar'd 70
 For those rebellious; here their prison ordain'd,
 In utter darkness, and their portion set
 As far remov'd from God and light of Heav'n,
 As from the centre thrice to th' utmost pole.
 O how unlike the place from whence they fell! 75
 There the companions of his fall, o'erwhelm'd
 With floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,
 He soon discerns; and weltring by his side
 One next himself in pow'r, and next in crime,
 Long after known in Palestine, and nam'd 80
 Beëlzebub. To whom th' Arch-enemy,
 And thence in Heav'n call'd Satan, with bold words
 Breaking the horrid silence thus began.

If thou beest He; But O how fall'n! how chang'd
 From him, who in the happy realms of light 85
 Cloth'd with transcendent brightness didst out-shine
 Myriads tho' bright! If he whom mutual league,
 United thoughts and counsels, equal hope
 And hazard in the glorious enterprise,
 Join'd with me once, now misery hath join'd 90
 In equal ruin! Into what pit thou seest
 From what height fall'n, so much the stronger prov'd
 He with his thunder: and till then who knew
 The force of those dire arms? Yet not for those,
 Nor what the potent victor in his rage 95
 Can else inflict, do I repent or change,
 Though chang'd in outward lustre, that fix'd mind
 And high disdain from sense of injur'd merit,
 That with the Mightiest rais'd me to contend,
 And to the fierce contention brought along 100
 Innumerable force of spirits arm'd,
 That durst dislike his reign, and me preferring,

His utmost pow'r with adverse pow'r oppos'd
 In dubious battel on the plains of Heav'n,
 And shook his throne. What tho' the field be lost? 105
 All is not lost; th' unconquerable will,
 And study of revenge, immortal hate,
 And courage never to submit or yield,
 And what is else not to be overcome;
 That glory never shall his wrath or might 110
 Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace
 With suppliant knee, and deify his pow'r,
 Who from the terror of this arm so late
 Doubted his empire; that were low indeed,
 That were an ignominy and shame beneath 115
 This downfall; since by fate the strength of Gods
 And this empyreal substance cannot fail,
 Since through experience of this great event
 In arms not worse, in foresight much advanc'd,
 We may with more successful hope resolve 120
 To wage by force or guile eternal war,
 Irreconcilable to our grand foe,
 Who now triumphs, and in th' excess of joy
 Sole reigning holds the tyranny of heaven.
 So spake th' apostate Angel, though in pain, 125
 Vaunting aloud, but rack'd with deep despair:
 And him thus answer'd soon his bold compeer.
 O Prince, O chief of many throned Powers,
 That led th' imbattel'd Seraphim to war
 Under thy conduct, and in dreadful deeds 130
 Fearless, endanger'd Heav'n's perpetual king,
 And put to proof his high supremacy,
 Whether upheld by strength, or chance, or fate;
 Too well I see and rue the dire event,
 That with sad overthrow and foul defeat 135
 Hath lost us Heav'n, and all this mighty host
 In horrible destruction laid thus low,
 As far as Gods and heav'nly essences
 Can perish: for the mind and spirit remains
 Invincible, and vigor soon returns, 140
 Though

Though all our glory extinct, and happy state
Here swallow'd up in endless misery.

But what if he our conqueror, whom I now
Of force believe almighty, since no less
Than such could have o'er-pow'r'd such force as ours,
Have left us this our spirit and strength entire

Strongly to suffer and support our pains,
That we may so suffice his vengeful ire,
Or do him mightier service as his thralls
By right of war, whate'er his business be,

Here in the heart of Hell to work in fire,
Or do his errands in the gloomy deep;

What can it then avail, though yet we feel
Strength undiminish'd, or eternal being

To undergo eternal punishment?
Whereto with speedy words th' Arch-fiend reply'd.

Fall'n Cherub, to be weak is miserable
Doing or suffering: but of this be sure,
To do ought good never will be our task,
But ever to do ill our sole delight,

As being the contrary to his high will
Whom we resist. If then his providence

Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,
Our labour must be to pervert that end,
And out of good still to find means of evil;

Which oft-times may succeed, so as perhaps
Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb

His inmost counsels from their destin'd aim.
But see! the angry victor hath recall'd

His ministers of vengeance and pursuit
Back to the gates of Heav'n: the sulphurous hail

Shot after us in storm, o'er-blown hath laid
The fiery surge, that from the precipice

Of Heav'n receiv'd us falling; and the thunder,
Wing'd with red lightning and impetuous rage,

Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now
To bellow through the vast and boundless deep.

Let us not slip th' occasion, whether scorn,
Or

Or satiate fury yield it from our foe. 180
 Seest thou yon dreary plain, forlorn and wild,
 The seat of desolation, void of light,
 Save what the glimmering of these livid flames
 Casts pale and dreadful? Thither let us tend
 From off the tossing of these fiery waves,
 There rest, if any rest can harbour there, 185
 And re-assembling our afflicted Powers,
 Consult how we may henceforth most offend
 Our enemy, our own loss how repair,
 How overcome this dire calamity,
 What reinforcement we may gain from hope, 190
 If not what resolution from despair.

Thus Satan talking to his nearest mate
 With head up-lift above the wave, and eyes
 That sparkling blaz'd, his other parts besides
 Prone on the flood, extended long and large 195
 Lay floating many a rood; in bulk as huge
 As whom the fables name of monstrous size,
 Titanian, or Earth-born, that warr'd on Jove,
 Briareus or Typhon, whom the den
 By ancient Tarsus held, or that sea-beast 200
 Leviathan, which God of all his works
 Created hugest that swim the ocean stream;
 Him haply slumb'ring on the Norway foam,
 The pilot of some small night-founder'd kiff,
 Deeming some island, oft, as sea-men tell, 205
 With fixed anchor in his scaly rind
 Moors by his side under the lee, while night
 Invest the sea, and wished morn delays;
 So stretch'd out huge in length the Arch-fiend lay,
 Chain'd on the burning lake, nor ever thence 210
 Had ris'n or heav'd his head, but that the will
 And high permission of all-ruling Heaven
 Left him at large to his own dark designs,
 That with reiterated crimes he might
 Heap on himself damnation, while he sought 215
 Evil to others, and enrag'd might see

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How all his malice serv'd but to bring forth
 Infinite goodness, grace and mercy shown
 On Man by him seduc'd, but on himself
 Treble confusion, wrath and vengeance pour'd. 220
 Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool
 His mighty stature; on each hand the flames
 Driv'n backward slope their pointing spires, and roll'd
 In billows, leave i'th' midst a horrid vale.
 Then with expanded wings he steers his flight 225
 Aloft, incumbent on the dusky air
 That felt unusual weight, till on dry land
 He lights, if it were land that ever burn'd
 With solid, as the lake with liquid fire;
 And such appear'd in hue, as when the force 230
 Of subterranean wind transports a hill
 Torn from Pelorus, or the shatter'd side
 Of thund'ring Aetna, whose combustible
 And fuel'd entrails thence conceiving fire,
 Sublim'd with mineral fury, aid the winds, 235
 And leave a sing'd bottom all involv'd
 With stench and smoke; Such resting found the sole
 Of unblest feet. Him follow'd his next mate,
 Both glorying to have escap'd the Stygian flood
 As Gods, and by their own recover'd strength, 240
 Not by the sufferance of supernal Power.

Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,
 Said then the lost Arch-Angel, this the seat
 That we must change for heav'n, this mournful gloom
 For that celestial light? Be it so, since he 245
 Who now is sov'reign can dispose and bid
 What shall be, right farthest from him is best,
 Whom reason equal'd, force hath made supreme
 Above his equals. Farewell happy fields,
 Where joy for ever dwells! Hail horrors! hail 250
 Infernal world, and thou profoundest Hell!
 Receive thy new possessor, one who brings
 A mind not to be chang'd by place or time.
 The mind is its own place, and in itself

Can make a Heav'n of Hell, a Hell of Heaven. 255
 What matter where, if I be still the same,
 And what I should be, all but less than he
 Whom thunder hath made greater? here at least
 We shall be free; th' Almighty hath not built
 Here for his envy, will not drive us hence: 260
 Here we may reign secure; and in my choice
 To reign is worth ambition tho' in hell:
 Better to reign in Hell; than serve in Heaven.
 But wherefore let we then our faithful friends
 Th' associates and copartners of our loss, 265
 Lie thus astonish'd on th' oblivious pool,
 And call them not to share with us their part
 In this unhappy mansion, or once more
 With rallied arms to try what may be yet
 Regain'd in Heav'n, or what more lost in Hell? 270

So Satan spake, and him Beëlzebub
 Thus answer'd. Leader of those armies bright,
 Which but th' Omnipotent none could have foil'd,
 If once they hear that voice, their liveliest pledge
 Of hope in fears and dangers, heard so oft 275
 In worst extremes, and on the perilous edge
 Of battel when it rag'd, in all assaults
 Their surest signal, they will soon resume
 New courage and revive, tho' now they lie
 Groveling and prostrate on yon lake of fire, 280
 As we ere while, astounded and amaz'd,
 No wonder, fall'n such a pernicious height.

He scarce had ceas'd when the superior Fiend
 Was moving toward the shore; his pond'rous shield,
 Ethereal temper, massy, large and round, 285
 Behind him cast; the broad circumference
 Hung on his shoulders like the Moon, whose orb
 Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views
 At evening from the top of Resol'd,
 Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands, 290
 Rivers or mountains in her spotty globe.
 His spear, to equal which the tallest pine

Hewn

Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast-head of
 Of some great ammiral, were but a wand,
 He walk'd with to support uneasy steps
 Over the burning marle not like those steps
 On heaven's azure, and the torrid clime
 Smote on him fore besides, vaulted with fire:
 Nathless he so endur'd, till on the beach
 Of that inflamed sea he stood, and call'd
 His legions, Angel-forms, who lay entranc'd,
 Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks
 In Vallombrosa, where th' Etrurian shades
 High over-arch'd embow'r; or scatter'd sedge
 Aflote, when with fierce winds Orion arm'd
 Hath vex'd the Red-Sea coast, whose waves o'erthrew
 Buziris and his Memphian chivalry,
 While with perfidious hatred they persued
 The sojourners of Goshen, who beheld
 From the safe shore their floating carcases
 And broken chariot wheels: so thick bestrown
 Abjeſt and loſt lay theſe, covering the flood,
 Under amazement of their hideous change.
 He call'd ſo loud, that all the hollow deep
 Of hell reſounded. Princes, Potentates,
 Warriors, the flow'r of Heav'n, once your's, now loſt,
 If ſuch aſtoniſhment as this can ſeiſe
 Eternal Spirits; or have ye choſ'n this place
 After the toil of battel to reſoſe
 Your wearied virtue, for the eaſe you find
 To ſlumber here, as in the vales of Heaven?
 Or in this abjeſt paſture have ye ſworn
 To adore the conqueror? who now beholds
 Cherub and Seraph rolling in the flood
 With ſcatter'd arms and enſigns, till anon
 His ſwift purſuers from Heav'n gates diſcern
 Th' advantage, and deſcending tread us down
 Thus drooping, or with linked thunderbolts
 Tranſfix us to the bottom of this gulph,
 Awake, ariſe, or be for ever fall'n
 They

They heard, and were abash'd, and up they sprung
 Upon the wing, as when men wont to watch
 On duty, sleeping found by whom they dread,
 Rouse and bestir themselves ere well awake.
 Nor did they not perceive the evil plight 335
 In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel;
 Yet to their General's voice they soon obey'd
 Innumerable. As when the potent Rod
 Of Amram's Son, in Egypt's evil day,
 Wav'd round the coast, up call'd a pitchy cloud 340
 Of locusts, warping on the eastern wind,
 That o'er the realm of impious Pharaoh hung
 Like night, and darken'd all the land of Nile:
 So numberless were those bad Angels seen
 Hovering on wing under the cope of Hell 345
 'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding fires;
 Till, as a signal giv'n, th'up-lifted spear
 Of their great Sultan waving to direct
 Their course, in even ballance down they light
 On the firm brimstone, and fill all the plain; 350
 A multitude! like which the populous north
 Pour'd never from her frozen loins, to pass
 Rhene or the Danaw, when her barbarous sons
 Came like a deluge on the south, and spread
 Beneath Gibraltar to the Libyan sands. 355
 Forthwith from ev'ry squadron and each band
 The heads and leaders thither haste where stood
 Their great commander; God-like shapes and forms
 Excelling human, princely Dignities,
 And Pow'rs, that erst in heaven sat on thrones; 360
 Though of their names in heav'nly records now
 Be no memorial, blotted out and ras'd
 By their rebellion, from the books of life,
 Nor had they yet among the sons of Eve 364
 Got them new names, till wand'ring o'er the earth,
 Thro' God's high sufferance for the tryal of man,
 By falsities and lies the greatest part
 Of mankind they corrupted to forsake

God

God

God their creator, and th'invisible
Glory of him that made them to transform
Oft to the image of a brute, adorn'd
With gay religions full of pomp and gold,
And Devils to adore for Deities:
Then were they known to men by various names,
And various Idols thro' the Heathen world.

Say, Muse, their names then known; who first, who last,
Rous'd from the slumber, on that fiery couch,
At their great emperor's call, as next in worth
Came singly where he stood on the bare strand,
While the promiscuous croud stood yet aloof.
The chief were those who from the pit of Hell
Roaming to seek their prey on earth, durst fix
Their seats long after next the seat of God,
Their altars by his altar, Gods ador'd
Among the nations round, and durst abide
Jehovah thund'ring out of Sion, thron'd
Between the Cherubim; yea, often plac'd
Within his sanctuary itself their shrines,
Abominations; and with cursed things
His holy rites and solemn feasts profan'd,
And with their darkness durst affront his light.
First Moloch, horrid king, besmear'd with blood
Of human sacrifice, and parents tears,
Though for the noise of drums and timbrels loud
Their children cries unheard, that pass'd through fire
To his grim idol. Him the Ammonite
Worship'd in Rabba and her watry plain,
In Argob and in Basan, to the stream
Of utmost Arnon. Nor content with such
Audacious neighbourhood, the wisest heart
Of Solomon he led by fraud to build
His temple right against the temple of God
On that opprobrious hill, and made his grove
The pleasant valley of Hinnom, Tophet thence
And black Gehenna call'd, the type of Hell,
Next Chemos, th' obscene dread of Moab's sons,

From

From Aroar to Nebo, and the wild
 Of southmoſt Abarim; in Heſebon
 And Horonaim, Seon's realm; beyond
 The flow'ry dale of Sibma clad with vines, 416
 And Eleäle to the Asphaltic pool.
 Peor his other name, when he entic'd
 Iſrael in Sittim on their march from Nile
 To do him wanton rites, which coſt them woe,
 Yet thence his luſtful orgies he enlarg'd 418
 Even to that hill of ſcandal, by the grove
 Of Moloch homicide, luſt hard by hate;
 Till good Iofiah drove them thence to Hell.
 With theſe came they, who from the bord'ring flood
 Of old Euphrates to the brook that parts 420
 Aegypt from Syrian ground, had general names
 Of Baälim and Aſhtaroth; thoſe male,
 Theſe feminine. For Spirits when they pleaſe
 Can either ſex aſſume, or both; ſo oft
 And uncompound'd is their eſſence pure, 425
 Not ty'd or manacled with joint or limb,
 Nor founded on the brittle ſtrength of bones,
 Like cumbrous fleſh; but in what ſhape they chooſe
 Dilated or condens'd, bright or obſcure,
 Can execute their airy purpoſes, 430
 And works of love or enmity fulfil.
 For thoſe the race of Iſrael oft forſook
 Their living ſtrength, and unfrequented left
 His righteous altar, bowing lowly down
 To beſtial Gods; for which their heads as low 435
 Bow'd down in battel, ſunk before the ſpear
 Of deſpicable foes. Which theſe in troop
 Came Aſtoreth, whom the Phœnicians call'd
 Aſtarte, queen of Heaven, with crescent horns;
 To whoſe bright image nightly by the moon 440
 Sidonian virgins paid their vows and ſongs,
 In Sion alſo not unſung, where ſtood
 Her temple on th' offensive mountain, built
 By that uxorious King, whoſe heart tho' large,

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Beguil'd by fair idolatresses, fell
 To idols foul. Thammuz came next behind,
 Whose annual wound in Lebanon allur'd
 The Syrian Damsels to lament his fate
 In am'rous ditties, all a summer's day,
 While smooth Adonis from his native rock 445
 Ran purple to the sea, suppos'd with blood
 Of Thammuz yearly wounded: the love-tale
 Infested Sion's daughters with like heat,
 Whose wanton passions in the sacred porch
 Ezekiel saw, when by the vision led 455
 His eyes survey'd the dark idolatries
 Of alienated Judah. Next came one
 Who mourn'd in earnest, when the captive ark
 Maim'd his brute image, head and hands lopt off
 In his own temple, on the grunsel edge, 460
 Where he fell flat, and sham'd his worshippers;
 Dagon his name, sea-monster, upward man
 And downward fish: yet had his temple high
 Rear'd in Azotus, dreaded through the coast
 Of Palestine, in Gath, and Ascalon, 465
 And Accaron, and Gaza's frontier bounds.
 Him follow'd Rimmon, whose delightful seat
 Was fair Damascus, on the fertile banks
 Of Abbana and Pharphar, lucid streams,
 He also against the house of God was bold:
 A leper once he lost, and gain'd a king, 470
 Ahaz his sottish conqu'ror, whom he drew
 God's altar to disparage and displace,
 For one of Syrian mode, whereon to burn
 His odious offerings, and adore the Gods
 Whom he had vanquish'd. After these appear'd 475
 A crew who under names of old renown,
 Osiris, Isis, Orus, and their train,
 With monstrous shapes and sorceries abus'd
 Fanatic Egypt and her priests, to seek 480
 Their wand'ring Gods disguis'd in brutish forms
 Rather than human. Nor did Israel 'scape

From

The infection, when their borrow'd gold compos'd
 The calf in Oreb; and the rebel king
 Doubled that sin in Bethel and in Dan,
 Likening his Maker to the grazed ox,
 Jehovah, who in one night when he pass'd
 From Aegypt marching, equal'd with one stroke
 Both her first-born and all her bleating Gods,
 Belial came last, than whom a spirit more lewd
 Fell not from Heaven, or more gross to love
 Vice for itself: to him no temple stood
 Or altar smoak'd; yet who more oft than he
 In temples and at altars, when the priest
 Turns atheist, as did Eli's sons; who fill'd
 With lust and violence the house of God?
 In courts and palaces he also reigns
 And in luxurious cities, where the noise
 Of riot ascends above their loftiest towers,
 And injury and outrage: and when night
 Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons
 Of Belial, flown with insolence and wine.
 Witness the streets of Sodom, and that night
 In Gibeah, when the hospitable door
 Expos'd a matron to avoid worse rape

These were the prime in order and in might;
 The rest were long to tell, tho' far renown'd:
 Th' Ionian Gods, of Javan's issue held
 Gods, yet confess'd later than Heav'n and Earth,
 Their boasted parents. Titan, heav'n's first-born,
 With his enormous brood, and birthright seiz'd
 By younger Saturn; he from mightier Jove
 His own and Rhea's son like measure found;
 So Jove usurping reign'd: these first in Crete
 And Ida known, thence on the snowy top
 Of cold Olympus rul'd the middle air,
 Their highest Heav'n; or on the Delphian cliff,
 Or in Dodona, and through all the bounds
 Of Doric land; or who with Saturn old

Fled

Fled over Adria to the Hesperian fields, 520
And o'er the Celtic roam'd the utmost isles.

All these and more came flocking, but with looks
Down-cast and damp, yet such wherein appear'd
Obscure some glimpse of joy, to have found their Chief
Not in despair, to have found themselves not lost 525
In loss itself; which on his count'nance cast

Like doubtful hue: but he his wonted pride
Soon recollecting, with high words, that bore
Semblance of worth, not substance, gently rais'd
Their fainting courage, and dispell'd their fears. 530

Then strait commands that at the warlike sound
Of trumpets loud, and clarions, be uprear'd
His mighty standard: that proud honor claim'd
Azazel as his right, a Cherub tall;

Who forthwith from the glittering staff unfurl'd 535
Th' imperial ensign; which full high advanc'd,
Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind.

With gems and golden lustre rich imblaz'd,
Seraphic arms and trophies: all the while
Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds: 540

At which the universal host up sent

A shout that tore Hell's concave; and beyond
Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night.

All in a moment thro' the gloom were seen
Ten thousand banners rise into the air 545

With orient colours waving: with them rose

A forest huge of spears; and thronging helms
Appear'd, and serried shields in thick array,

Of depth immeasurable: anon they move
In perfect Phalanx to the Dorian mood 550

Of flutes, and soft recorders; such as rais'd

To height of noblest temper Heroes old

Arming to battel; and instead of rage,

Deliberate valor breath'd, firm, and unmov'd
With dread of death to flight or foul retreat; 555

Nor wanting power to mitigate and swage,

With solemn touches, troubled thoughts, and chase

Anguish, and doubt, and fear, and sorrow, and pain,
 From mortal or immortal minds. Thus they
 Breathing united force, with fixed thought 560
 Mov'd on in silence to soft pipes; that charm'd
 Their painful steps o'er the burnt soil: and now
 Advanc'd in view, they stand, a horrid front
 Of dreadful length, and dazzling arms, in guise
 Of warriors old with order'd spear and shield, 565
 Awaiting what command their mighty Chief
 Had to impose: he thro' the armed files
 Darts his experienc'd eye, and soon traverse
 The whole battalion views their order due;
 Their visages and stature as of Gods; 570
 Their number last he sums. And now his heart
 Distends with pride, and hard'ning in his strength
 Glories: for never since, created man
 Met such imbodied force, as nam'd with these
 Could merit more than that small infantry 575
 Warr'd on by cranes: tho' all the Giant brood
 Of Phlegra with th' Heroic race were join'd,
 That fought at Thebes and Ilium, on each side
 Mix'd with auxiliar Gods! and what resounds
 In fable or romance of Uther's son, 580
 Begirt with British and Armoric Knights;
 And all who since, baptiz'd or infidel,
 Jostled in Aspramont or Montalban,
 Damasco, or Marocco, or Trebisond;
 Or whom Biserta sent from Afric shore, 585
 When Charlemain with all his Peerage fell
 By Fontarabbia. Thus far these beyond
 Compare of mortal prowess, yet observ'd
 Their dread commander: he, above the rest 590
 In shape and gesture proudly eminent,
 Stood like a tow'r: his form had yet not lost
 All her original brightness, nor appear'd
 Less than Arch-Angel ruin'd, and th' excess
 Of glory obscur'd: as when the Sun new-ris'n
 Looks thro' the horizontal misty air, 595
 Shorn

d pain,

560

Shorn of his beams; or from behind the moon;
In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds
On half the nations; and with fear of change
Perplexes Monarchs; darken'd so, yet shone
Above them all th' Arch-Angel: but his face
Deep scars of thunder had intrench'd, and care

565

Sate on his faded cheek, but under brows
Of dauntless courage, and confederate pride
Waiting revenge: cruel his eye, but cast
Signs of remorse and passion to behold
The fellows of his crime, the followers rather,

570

Far other once beheld in bliss; condemn'd
For ever now to have their lot in pain;
Millions of spirits for his fault amerc'd
Of heav'n, and from eternal splendors flung
For his revolt, yet faithful now they stood,

575

Their glory wither'd: as when Heaven's fire
Hath scath'd the forest oaks, or mountain pines,
With singed top their stately growth tho' bare
Stands on the blasted heath. He now prepar'd
To speak, whereat their doubled ranks they bend

580

From wing to wing, and half-inclose him round
With all his Peers: attention held them mute:
Thrice he assay'd, and thrice in spite of scorn
Tears, such as Angels weep, burst forth: at last
Words interwove with sighs found out their way.

585

O myriads of immortal spirits! O Powers
Matchless, but with th' Almighty, and that strife
Was not inglorious, tho' th' event was dire,
As this place testifies, and this dire change,
Hateful to utter: but what pow'r of mind,

590

Foreseeing or presaging, from the depth
Of knowledge past or present, could have fear'd,
How such united force of Gods, how such
As stood like these, could ever know repulse?
For who can yet believe, tho' after loss,

595

That all these puissant legions, whose exile
Hath emptied Heav'n, shall fail to re-ascend

Shorn

Self rais'd, and re-possess their native seat?
 For me be witness all the host of heav'n, 635
 If counsels different, or danger shunn'd
 By me, have lost our hopes: but he who reigns
 Monarch in Heav'n, 'till then as one secure
 Sate on his throne, upheld by old repute,
 Consent or custom, and his regal state 640
 Put forth at full, but still his strength conceal'd,
 Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall.
 Henceforth his might we know, and know our own;
 So as not either to provoke, or dread
 New war, provok'd; our better part remains 645
 To work in close design, by fraud or guile,
 What force effected not: that he no less
 At length from us may find, who overcomes
 By force, hath overcome but half his foe.
 Space may produce new worlds; whereof so rise 650
 There went a fame in Heav'n, that he ere long
 Intended to create; and therein plant
 A generation, whon his choice regard
 Should favour equal to the sons of Heav'n;
 Thither, if but to pry, shall be perhaps 655
 Our first eruption, thither or elsewhere:
 For this infernal pit shall never hold
 Celestial spirits in bondage, nor th'abyss
 Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts
 Full counsel must mature; peace is despair'd, 660
 For who can think submission? war then, war
 Open or understood must be resolv'd.
 He spake: and to confirm his words out-flew
 Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs
 Of mighty Cherubim: the sudden blaze 665
 Far round illumin'd Hell; highly they rag'd
 Against the Highest, and fierce with grasped arms
 Clash'd on their sounding shields the din of war,
 Hurling defiance toward the vault of Heav'n.
 There stood a hill not far, whose grisly top 670
 Belch'd fire and rolling smoke; the rest entire
 Shone

Shone with a glossy scurf, undoubted sign
 That in his womb was hid metallic ore,
 The work of sulphur. Thither wing'd with speed
 A numerous brigad hasten'd: as when bands
 Of pioneers, with spade and pickax arm'd,
 Forerun the royal camp, to trench a field,
 Or cast a rampart. Mammon led them on,
 Mammon, the least erected spirit that fell
 From Heav'n; for ev'n in Heav'n his looks and thoughts
 Where always downward bent; admiring more
 The riches of Heav'n's pavement, trodden gold,
 Than ought divine or holy else, enjoy'd
 In vision beatific: by him first
 Men also, and by his suggestion taught,
 Ranack'd the center, and with impious hands
 Riffled the bowels of their mother earth,
 For treasures better hid. Soon had his crew
 Open'd into the hill a spacious wound,
 And dig'd out ribs of gold. Let none admire
 That riches grow in Hell; that soil may best
 Deserve the precious bane. And here let those
 Who boast in mortal things, and wond'ring tell
 Of Babel, and the works of Memphian kings,
 Learn how their greatest monuments of fame,
 And strength and art are easily out-done
 By spirits reprobate, and in an hour
 What in an age they with incessant toil
 And hands innumerable scarce perform.
 Nigh on the plain in many cells prepar'd,
 That underneath had veins of liquid fire
 Sluc'd from the lake, a second multitude
 With wondrous art found out the massy ore;
 Severing each kind, and scumm'd the bullion dross;
 A third as soon had form'd within the ground
 A various mold; and from the boiling cells
 By strange conveyance fill'd each hollow nook:
 As in an Organ from one blast of wind
 To many a row of pipes the found-board breathes.

Anon out of the earth a fabric huge 710
 Rose like an exhalation, with the sound
 Of dulcet symphonies and voices sweet,
 Built like a temple, where pilasters round
 Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid
 With golden architrave: nor did there want 715
 Cornice or freeze, with bossy sculptures graven;
 The roof was fretted gold. Not Babylon,
 Nor great Alcairo such magnificence
 Equal'd in all their glories, to inshrine
 Belus, or Serapis their Gods, or seat 720
 Their kings, when Egypt with Assyria strove
 In wealth and luxury. Th' ascending pile
 Stood fix'd her stately height, and strait the doors
 Opening their brazen folds, discover wide
 Within, her ample spaces, o'er the smooth 725
 And level pavement: from the arched roof,
 Pendent by subtle magic many a row
 Of starry lamps and blazing cressets, fed
 With Naphtha and Asphaltus, yielded light
 As from a sky. The hasty multitude 730
 Admiring enter'd, and the work some praise
 And some the architect: his hand was known
 In Heav'n by many a tow'rd structure high,
 Where scepter'd angels held their residence,
 And sat as Princes; whom the supreme king 735
 Exalted to such power, and gave to rule,
 Each in Hierarchy, the orders bright.
 Not was his name unheard, or unador'd,
 In ancient Greece; and in Ausonian land
 Men call'd him Mulciber; and how he fell 740
 From Heav'n they fabled, thrown by angry Jove
 Sheer o'er the chrystal battlements; from morn
 To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve,
 A summer's day: and with the setting sun
 Dropt from the zenith like a falling star: 745
 On Lemnos th' Aegean isle; thus they relate,
 Erring; for he with this rebellious rout

Fell

Fell long before, nor ought evail'd him now
T' have built in Heave'n high tow'rs; nor did he 'scape
By all his engines, but was headlong sent 750
With his industrious crew to build in Hell.

Mean while the winged heralds by command
Of sov'reign pow'r, with awful ceremony
And trumpets sound, throughout the host proclaim'd
A solemn council forthwith to be held. 755
At Pandemonium, the high capital

Of Satan and his Peers: their summons call'd
From every band and squared regiment
By place or choise the worthiest; they anon
With hundreds and with thousands trooping came: 760
Attended all access was throng'd, the gates

And porches wide, but chief the spacious hall,
Though like a cover'd field, where champions bold
Wont ride in arm'd, and at the Soldans chair
Defy'd the best of Panim chivalry 765

To mortal combat, or career with lance,
Thick swarm'd, both on the ground and in the air
Brush'd with the his of rustling winds. As bees
In spring time, when the sun with Taurus rides,
Pour forth their populous youth about the hive. 770
In clusters; they among fresh dews and flowers

Fly to and fro, or on the smoothed plank,
The suburb of their straw-built citadel,
New rubb'd with balm, expatiate and confer
Their state affairs. So thick the aery croud 775
Swarm'd and were straiten'd; till, the signal giv'n,

Behold a wonder! they but now who seem'd
In bigness to surpass earth's giant sons,
Now less than smallest dwarfs, in narrow room
Throng numberless, like that pygmean race 780
Beyond the Indian mount, or fairy elves

Whose midnight revels by a forest side
Or fountain, some belated peasant sees,
Or dreams he sees, while over-head the moon
Sits arbitress, and nearer to the earth 785

Weehs her pale course; they on their mirth and dance
 Intent, with jocund music charm his ear;
 At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds:
 Thus incorporeal spirits to smallest forms
 Reduc'd their shapes immense, and were at large, 790
 Though without number still amidst the hall
 Of that infernal court. But far within,
 And in their own dimensions like themselves,
 The great Seraphic Lords and Cherubim,
 In close recess and secret conclave sat;
 A thousand Demi-gods on golden seats, 795
 Frequent and full: after short silence then
 And summons read, the great consult began.

The End of First Book.

B O O K II.

High on a throne of royal state, which far
 Outshone the wealth of Ormus and of Ind,
 Or where the gorgeous east with richest hand
 Show'rs on her kings barbaric pearl and gold,
 Satan exalted sat, by merit rais'd 5
 To that bad eminence; and from despair
 Thus high uplifted beyond hope, aspires
 Beyond thus high, insatiate to pursue
 Vain war with Heav'n, and by success untaught
 His proud imaginations thus display'd. 10

Powers and Dominions, Deities of Heav'n!
 For since no deep within her gulph can hold
 Immortal vigor, though oppress'd and fall'n;
 I give not Heav'n for lost. From this descent
 Celestial virtues rising, will appear 15
 More glorious and more dread than from no fall,
 And trust themselves to fear no second fate.
 Me though just right, and the fix'd laws of Heav'n
 Did first create your leader, next free choice,
 With what besides, in council or in fight, 20

Hath

dance

790

795

5

10

15

20

Hath

Hath been achiev'd of merit, yet this loss
Thus far at least recover'd, hath much more
Establish'd in a safe unenvied throne,
Yielded with full consent. The happier state
In Heav'n, which follows dignity, might draw
Envy from each inferior; but who here
Will envy whom the highest place exposes
Foremost to stand against the Thunderer's aim
Your bulwark, and condemns to greatest share
Of endless pain? Where there is then no good
For which to strive, no strife can grow up there
From faction; for none sure will claim in Hell
Precedence; none, whose portion is so small
Of present pain, that with ambitious mind
Will covet more! With this advantage then
To union, and firm faith, and firm accord,
More than can be in Heav'n, we now return
To claim our just inheritance of old,
Surer to prosper than prosperity
Could have assur'd us; and by what best way,
Whether of open war or covert guile,
We now debate; who can advise may speak.

He ceas'd, and next him Moloch, sceptred king,
Stood up, the strongest and the fiercest spirit
That fought in Heav'n, now fiercer by despair
His trust was with th' Eternal to be deem'd
Equal in strength, and rather than be less
Car'd not to be at all; with that care lost
Went all his fear: of God, or Hell, or worse,
He reck'd not; and these words thereafter spake:

My sentence is for open war: of wiles,
More unexpert, I boast not: them let those
Contrive who need, or when they need, not now:
For while they sit contriving, shall the rest,
Millions that stand in arms, and longing wait
The signal to ascend, sit ling'ring here
Heav'n's fugitives; and for their dwelling-place
Accept this dark opprobrious den of shame,

The prison of his tyranny who reigns
 By our delay? No! let us rather choose,
 Arm'd with hell flames and fury, all at once
 O'er Heav'n's high tow'rs to force resistless way,
 Turning our tortures into horrid arms
 Against the torturer; when to meet the noise
 Of his Almighty engin he shall hear
 Infernal thunder, and for lightning see
 Black fire and horrot shot with equal rage
 Among his Angels; and his throne itself
 Mix'd with Tartarean sulphur, and strange fire,
 His own invented torments. But perhaps
 The way seems difficult and steep to scale
 With upright wing against a higher foe.
 Let such bethink them, if the sleepy drench
 Of that forgetful lake benumb not still,
 That in our proper motion we ascend
 Up to our native seat: descent and fall
 To us is adverse. Who but felt of late
 When the fierce foe hung on our broken rear
 Insulting, and persued us through the deep,
 With what compulsion and laborious flight
 We sunk thus low? th' ascent is easy then;
 Th' event is fear'd; should we again provoke
 Our stronger, some worse way his wrath may find
 To our destruction: if there be in Hell
 Fear to be worse destroy'd: what can be worse
 Than to dwell here, driv'n out from bliss, condemn'd
 In this abhorred deep to utter woe;
 Where pain of inextinguishable fire
 Must exercise us without hope of end,
 The vassals of his anger, when the scourge
 Inexorably and the torturing hour,
 Calls us to penance? More destroy'd than thus
 We should be quite abolish'd and expire.
 What fear then? what doubt we to incense
 His utmost ire? which to the height enrag'd,
 Will either quite consume us, and reduce

To

To nothing this essential; happier far
Than miserable to have eternal being:
Or if our substance be indeed divine,
And cannot cease to be, we are at worst
On this side nothing; and by proof we feel
Our power sufficient to disturb his Heav'n,
And with perpetual inroads to alarm,
Though inaccessible, his fatal throne:
Which, if not victory, is yet revenge.

He ended frowning, and his look denounc'd
Desperate revenge, and battel dangerous
To less than Gods. On th' other side up rose
Belial, in act more graceful and humane:
A fairer person lost not Heav'n; he seem'd
For dignity compos'd and high exploit;
But all was false and hollow; though his tongue
Dropt Manna, and could make the worse appear
The better reason, to perplex and dash
Maturest counsels: for his thoughts were low;
To vice industrious, but to nobler deeds
Tig'rous and slothful; yet he pleas'd the ear,
And with persuasive accent thus began.

I should be much for open war, O Peers,
As not behind in hate; if what was urg'd
Main reason to persuade immediate war,
Did not dissuade me most, and seem to cast
Ominous conjecture on the whole success:
When he who most excels in fact of arms,
In what he counsels and in what excels,
Mistrustful, grounds his courage on despair
And utter dissolution, as the scope
Of all his aim, after some dire revenge.
First, what revenge? the tow'rs of Heav'n are fill'd
With armed watch, that render all access
Impregnable; oft on the bordering deep
Encamp their legions, or with obscure wing
Scout far and wide into the realm of night,
Scorning surprise. Or could we break our way

To

By

By force, and at our heels all Hell should rise 135
 With blackest insurrection, to confound
 Heav'n's purest light; yet our great enemy
 All incorruptible would on his throne
 Sit unpolluted, and th' ethereal mould
 Incapable of stain, would soon expel 140
 Her mischief, and purge off the baser fire
 Victorious. Thus repuls'd, our final hope
 Is flat despair: we must exasperate
 Th' Almighty Victor to spend all his rage,
 And that must end us, that must be our cure 145
 To be no more: sad cure! for who would lose,
 Though full of pain, this intellectual being,
 Those thoughts that wander through eternity,
 To perish rather, swallow'd up and lost
 In the wide womb of uncreated night,
 Devoid of sense and motion? and who knows, 150
 Let this be good; whether our angry foe
 Can give it, or will ever? how he can,
 Is doubtful; that he never will, is sure.
 Will he, so wise, let loose at once his ire, 155
 Belike through impotence, or unaware,
 To give his enemies their wish, and end
 Them in his anger, whom his anger saves
 To punish endless? Wherefore cease we then?
 Say they who counsel war, we are decreed, 160
 Reserv'd, and destin'd to eternal woe;
 Whatever doing, what can we suffer more,
 What can we suffer worse? Is this then worst,
 Thus sitting, thus consulting, thus in arms?
 What! when we fled amain, pursu'd and struck 165
 With Heav'n's afflicting thunder, and besought
 The deep to shelter us? this Hell then seem'd
 A refuge from those wounds: or when we lay
 Chain'd on the burning lake? that fire was worse.
 What if the breath that kindled those grim fires, 170
 Awak'd should blow them into sevenfold rage,
 And plunge us in the flames? or from above

Should

Should intermitted vengeance arm again,
 His red right hand to plague us? what if all
 Her stores were open'd, and this firmament
 Of Hell should spout her cataracts of fire,
 Impendent horrors, threatning hideous fall
 One day upon our heads; while we perhaps
 Designing or exhorting glorious war,
 Caught in a fiery tempest shall be hurld
 Each on his rock transfix'd, the sport and prey
 Of racking whirlwinds; or for ever sunk
 Under yon boiling ocean, wrapt in chains;
 There to converse with everlasting groans,
 Unrespited, unpitied, unrepriev'd,
 Ages of hopeless end? this would be worse.
 War therefore, open or conceal'd, alike
 My voice dissuades; for what can force or guile
 With him, or who deceive his mind, whose eye
 Views all things at one view? He from Heav'n's height
 All these our motions vain sees and derides;
 Not more almighty to resist our might
 Than wise to frustrate all our plots and wiles.
 Shall we then live thus vile, the Race of Heaven
 Thus trampled, thus expell'd, to suffer here
 Chains and these torments? better these than worse,
 By my advice; since fate inevitable
 Subdues us, and omnipotent decree,
 The victor's will, To suffer as to do,
 Our strength is equal, nor the law unjust
 That so ordains. This was at first resolv'd
 If we were wise, against so great a foe
 Contending, and so doubtful what might fall.
 I laugh, when those who at the spear are bold
 And ventrous, if that fail them, shrink and fear
 What yet they know must follow, to endure
 Exile, or ignominy, or bonds, or pain,
 The sentence of their conqueror: this is now
 Our doom; which if we can sustain and bear,
 Our supreme foe, in time may much remit

His

His anger, and perhaps thus far remov'd
 Not mind us not offending, satisfy'd
 With what is punish'd; whence these raging fires
 Will flaken, if his breath stir not their flames.
 Our purer essence then will overcome 215
 Their noxious vapor; or enur'd, not feel;
 Or chang'd at length, and to the place conform'd
 In temper and in nature, will receive
 Familiar the fierce heat, and void of pain;
 This horror will grow mild, this darkness light: 220
 Besides what hope the never-ending flight
 Of future days may bring, what chance, what change
 Worth waiting, since our present lot appears
 For happy though but ill, for ill not worst,
 If we procure not to ourselves more woe. 225

Thus Belial with words cloath'd in reason's garb
 Counsel'd ignoble ease, and peaceful sloth
 Not peace: and after him thus Mammon spake.
 Either to disenthronè the king of Heav'n
 We war, if war be best, or to regain 230
 Our own-right lost. Him to unthronè we then
 May hope, when everlasting Fate shall yield
 To fickle Chance, and Chaos judge the strife:
 The former vain to hope argues as vain
 The latter: for what place can be for us 235
 Within Heav'n's bound, unless Heav'n's Lord Supreme
 We overpower? suppose he should relent
 And publish grace to all, on promise made
 Of new subjection: with what eyes could we
 Stand in his presence bumble, and receive 240
 Strict laws impos'd, to celebrate his throne.
 With warbled hymns, and to his Godhead sing
 Forc'd hallelujahs; while he lordly sits
 Our envy'd Sov'reign, and his altar breathes
 Ambrosial odors, and ambrosial flowers, 245
 Our servile offerings? This must be our task
 In Heav'n, this our delight; how wearisome
 Eternity so spent in worship paid

To

To whom we hate! let us not then pursue
 By force impossible, by leave obtain'd 250
 Unacceptable, though in Heav'n, our state
 Of splendid vassalage; but rather seek
 Our own good from ourselves, and from our own
 Live to ourselves, though in this vast recess,
 Free, and to none accountable, preferring 255
 Hard liberty before the easy yoke
 Of servile pomp. Our greatness will appear
 Then most conspicuous, when great things of small,
 Useful of hurtful, prosperous of adverse
 We can create; and in what place so e'er 260
 Thrive under evil, and work ease out of pain,
 Through labor and indurance. This deep world
 Of darkness do we dread? how oft amidst
 Thick clouds and dark doth Heav'n's all-ruling Sire
 Choose to reside, his glory unobscur'd, 265
 And with the majesty of darkness round
 Covers his throne; from whence deep thunders roar
 Must'ring their rage; and Heav'n resembles Hell?
 As he our darkness, cannot we his light
 Imitate when we please? this desert soil 270
 Wants not her hidden lustre, gems and gold:
 Nor want we skill or art, from whence to raise
 Magnificence; and what can Heav'n shew more?
 Our torments also may in length of time
 Become our elements; these piercing fires 275
 As soft as now severe, our temper chang'd
 Into their temper: which must needs remove
 The sensible of pain. All things invite
 To peaceful counsels, and the settled state
 Of order, how in safety best we may 280
 Compose our present evils, with regard
 Of what we are and where, dismissing quite
 All thoughts of war. Ye have what I advise.
 He scarce had finish'd, when such murmur fill'd
 Th' assembly, as when hollow rocks retain 285
 The sound of blustering winds, which all night long

Had

Had rous'd the sea, now with hoarse cadence full of
 Sea-fearing men o'erwatch'd, whose bark by chance
 Or pinnaces anchors in a craggy bay
 After the tempest: such applause was heard 290
 As Mammon ended, and his sentence pleas'd,
 Advising peace; for such another field
 They dreaded worse than Hell: so much the fear
 Of thunder, and the sword of Michaël
 Wrought still within them; and no less desire 295
 To found this nether Empire, which might rise
 By policy, and long process of time,
 In emulation opposite to Heaven.
 Which when Beëlzebub perceiv'd, than whom,
 Satan except, none higher sat, with grave 300
 Aspect he rose, and in his rising seem'd
 A pillar of state; deep on his front engraven
 Deliberation sat, and public care;
 And princely counsel in his face yet shone,
 Majestic though in ruin: sage he stood, 305
 With Atlantean shoulders fit to bear
 The weight of mightiest monarchies; his look
 Drew audience and attention still as night
 Or summer's noon-tide air, while thus he spake.
 Thrones, and Imperial Pow'rs, Offspring of Heav'n,
 Ethereal Virtues; or these titles now 310
 Must we renounce, and changing style, be call'd
 Princes of Hell? for so the popular vote
 Inclines, here to continue, and build up here
 A growing empire: doubtless; while we dream, 315
 And know not that the king of Heav'n hath doom'd
 This place our dungeon, not our safe retreat
 Beyond his potent arm, to live exempt
 From Heav'n's high jurisdiction, in new league
 Banded against his throne, but to remain 320
 In strictest bandage, though thus far remov'd
 Under th' inevitable curb, reserv'd
 His captive multitude: For he, be sure,
 In height or depth, still first and last will reign

Sole

Sole King, and of his kingdom lose no part 325
 By our revolt; but over Hell extend
 His empire, and with iron sceptre rule
 Us here, as with his golden those in Heav'n.
 What fit we then projecting peace and war?
 War hath determin'd us, and foil'd with loss 330
 Irreparable; terms of peace yet none
 Vouchsaf'd or sought: for what peace will be giv'n
 To us enslav'd, but custody severe,
 And stripes, and arbitrary punishment
 Inflicted? and what peace can we return? 335
 But, to our power, hostility, and hate,
 Untam'd reluctance, and revenge, though slow,
 Yet ever plotting how the conqueror least
 May reap his conquest, and may least rejoice
 In doing what we most in suffering feel? 340
 Nor will occasion want, nor shall we need
 With dangerous expedition to invade
 Heav'n, whose high walls fear no assault or siege,
 Or ambush from the deep: what if we find
 Some easier enterprize? there is a place, 345
 If ancient and prophetic fame in Heav'n
 Err not, another world, the happy seat
 Of some new race call'd Man, about this time
 To be created like to us, though less
 In pow'r and excellence, but favor'd more 350
 Of him who rules above: so was his will
 Pronounc'd among the Gods, and by an oath,
 That shook Heav'n's whole circumference, confirm'd:
 Thither let us bend all our thoughts, to learn
 What creatures there inhabit, of what mold, 355
 Or substance, how endu'd, and what their pow'r,
 And where their weakness, how attempted best,
 By force or subtlety. Though Heav'n be shut,
 And Heav'n's high arbitrator sit secure
 In his own strength, this place may lye expos'd 360
 The utmost border of his kingdom, lest
 To their defence who hold it: here perhaps

Some advantageous aft may be atchiev'd
 By sudden onfet, either with hell fire
 To wafte his whole creation, or poffefs 365
 All as our own, and drive, as we are driv'n;
 The puny habitans; or if not drive,
 Seduce them to our party, that their God
 May prove their foe, and with repenting hand
 Abolifh his own works. This would furpafs 370
 Common revenge, and interrupt his joy
 In our confufion, and our joy upraife
 In his difturbance; when his darling fons,
 Hurl'd headlong to partake with us, fhall curfe
 Their frail original, and faded blifs, 375
 Faded fo foon. Advife if this be worth
 Attempting, or to fit in darknefs here
 Hatching vain empires. — Thus Beëlzebub
 Plead'd his devilifh counfel, firft devis'd
 By Satan, and in part propos'd: for whence, 380
 But from the author of all ill, could fpring
 So deep a malice to confound the race
 Of mankind in one root, and earth with hell
 To mingle and involve, done all to fpite
 The great Creator? but their fpite ftill ferves 385
 His glory to augment. The bold defign
 Pleas'd highly thofe infernal States, and joy
 Sparkl'd in all their eyes; with full affent
 They vote: whereat his fpeech he thus renews.
 Well have ye judg'd, well ended long debate 390
 Synod of Gods! and, like to what ye are,
 Great things resolv'd; which from the loweft deep
 Will once more lift us up, in fpite of fate,
 Nearer out ancient feat; perhaps in view 394
 Of thofe bright confines, whence with neighbouring arms,
 And opportune excurfion, we may chance
 Re-enter Heav'n: or elfe in fome mild Zone
 Dwell not unvisited of Heav'n's fair light
 Secure, and at the brightning orient beam
 Purge off this gloom: the foft delicious air, 400
 To

To heal the scar of these corrosive fires
 Shall breathe her balm. But first whom shall we send
 In search of this new world; whom shall we find
 Sufficient? who shall tempt with wandring feet
 The dark unbottom'd infinite abyss, 405
 And through the palpable obscure find out
 His uncouth way, or spread his aëry flight
 Upborn with indefatigable wings

Over the vast abrupt, e'er he arrive
 The happy isle? What strength, what art can then 410
 Suffice, or what evasion bear him safe
 Through the strict senteries, and stations thick
 Of Angels watching round? here he had need
 All circumspection; and we now no less
 Choice in our suffrage: for on whom we send, 415
 The weight of all and our last hope relies.

This said, he sat; and expectation held
 His look suspense, awaiting who appear'd
 To second, or oppose, or undertake
 The perilous attempt: But all sat mute, 420
 Pondering the danger with deep thoughts; and each
 In others count'nance read his own dismay
 Astonish'd: none, among the choice and prime
 Of those heav'n-warring champions, could be found
 So hardy, as to proffer or accept 425
 Alone the dreadful voyage: till at last
 Satan, whom now transcendent glory rais'd
 Above his fellows, with monarchal pride
 Conscious of highest worth, unmov'd thus spake.

O Progeny of Heav'n, empyreal Thrones! 430
 With reason hath deep silence and demur
 Seiz'd us, though undismay'd: long is the way
 And hard, that out of Hell leads up to light.
 Our prison strong, this huge convex of fire,
 Outragious to devour, immures us round 435
 Ninefold: and gates of burning adamant
 Barr'd over us prohibit all egress
 These pass'd, if any pass, the void profound

Of unessential night receives him next
 Wide gaping, and with utter loss of being 440
 Threatens him, plung'd in that abortive gulf.
 If thence he scape into whatever world,
 Or unknown region, what remains him less
 Than unknown dangers, and as hard escape?
 But I should ill become this throne, O Peers, 445
 And this imperial sov'reignty, adorn'd
 With splendor, arm'd with pow'r, if ought propos'd
 And judg'd of public moment, in the shape
 Of difficulty or danger could deter
 Me from attempting. Wherefore do I assume 450
 These Royalties, and not refuse to reign,
 Refusing to accept as great a share
 Of hazard as of honor, due alike
 To him who reigns, and so much to him due
 Of hazard more, as he above the rest 455
 High honor'd sits? Go therefore mighty Pow'rs,
 Terror of Heav'n, though fall'n; intend at home,
 While here shall be our home, what best may ease
 The present misery, and render Hell
 More tolerable; if there be cure or charm 460
 To respite or deceive, or slack the pain
 Of this ill mansion. Intermit no watch
 Against a wakeful foe, while I abroad
 Through all the coast of dark destruction seek
 Deliverance for us all: this enterprize 465
 None shall partake with me. — Thus saying rose
 The Monarch, and prevented all reply;
 Prudent, lest from his resolution rais'd
 Others among the chief might offer now,
 Certain to be refus'd, what erst they fear'd; 470
 And so refus'd might in opinion stand
 His rivals, winning cheap the high repute
 Which he through hazard huge must earn. But they
 Dreaded not more th' adventure than his voice
 Forbidding; and at once with him they rose: 475
 Their rising all at once was as the sound

Of

Of thunder heard remote. Towards him they bend,
 With awful reverence prone; and as a God
 Extol him equal to the highest in Heav'n:
 Nor fail'd they to express how much they prais'd, 480
 That for the general safety he despis'd
 His own: for neither do the spirits damn'd
 Lose all their virtue; lest bad men should boast
 Their specious deeds on earth, which glory excites;
 Or close ambition varnish'd o'er with zeal. 485
 Thus they their doubtful consultations dark
 Ended, rejoicing in their matchless Chief:
 As when from mountain tops the dusky clouds
 Ascending, while the north-wind sleeps, o'er-spread
 Heav'n's cheerful face, the lowering element 490
 Scowls o'er the darken'd landscape snow, or shower;
 If chance the radiant sun with farewell sweet
 Extend his ey'ning beam, the fields revive,
 The birds their notes renew, and bleating herds
 Attest their joy, that hill and valley rings. 495
 O shame to men! Devil with Devil damn'd
 Firm concord holds; men only disagree
 Of creatures rational, though under hope
 Of heav'nly grace: and God proclaiming peace,
 Yet live in hatred; enmity and strife 500
 Among themselves, and levy cruel wars,
 Wasting the earth, each other to destroy;
 As if, which might induce us to accord,
 Man had not hellish foes enow besides,
 That day and night for his destruction wait. 505
 The Stygian council thus dissolv'd, and forth
 In order came the grand infernal Peers:
 'Midst came their mighty Paramount, and seem'd
 Alone th' antagonist of heav'n, nor less
 Than Hell's dread Emperor, with pomp supreme, 510
 And Goh-like imitated state: him round
 A globe of fiery Seraphim inclos'd
 With bright emblazonry, and horrent arms.
 Then of their session ended they bid cry

With trumpets regal sound the great result: 515
 Tow'rd the four winds four speedy Cherubim
 Put to their mouths the sounding alchemy
 By heralds voice explain'd: the hollow Abyss
 Heard far and wide, and all the host of Hell
 With deaf'ning shout return'd them loud acclaim. 520
 Thence more at ease their minds, and somewhat rais'd
 By false presumptuous hope, the ranged Powers
 Disband, and wand'ring, each his several way
 Pursues, as inclination or sad choice
 Leads him perplex'd, where he may likeliest find 525
 Truce to his restless thoughts, and entertain
 The irksome hours, till his great chief return.
 Part on the plain, or in the air sublime
 Upon the wing, or in swift race contend,
 As at th' Olympian games or Pythian fields:
 Part curb their fiery steeds, or shun the goal 531
 With rapid wheels, or fronted brigads form.
 As when, to warn proud cities, war appears
 Wag'd in the troubl'd sky, and armies rush
 To battel in the clouds, before each van 535
 Prick forth the aery Knights, and couch their spears
 Till thickest legions close; with feats of arms
 From either end of heav'n the welkin burns.
 Others, with vast Typhoean rage, more fell
 Rend up both rocks and hills, and ride the air 540
 In whirlwind: Hell scarce hold the wild uproar.
 As when Alcides, from Oechalia crown'd
 With conquest, felt th' invenom'd robe, and tore
 Through pain up by the roots Thessalian pines,
 And Lichas from the top of Oeta threw 545
 Into th' Euboic sea. Others more mild,
 Retreated in a silent valley, sing
 With notes angelical to many a harp
 Their own heroic deeds and hapless fall
 By doom of battel; and complain that fate 550
 Free virtue should intrall to force or chance.
 Their song was partial, but the harmony,

What

515 What could it less when spirits immortal sing?
 Suspended Hell, and took with ravishment
 The thronging audience. In discourse more sweet, 555
 For eloquence the soul, song charms the sense,
 Others apart sat on a hill retir'd,
 In thoughts more elevate, an reason'd high
 Of providence, foreknowledge, will and fate,
 Fix'd fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute, 560
 And found no end, in wand'ring mazes lost.
 Of good and evil much they argued then,
 Of happiness and final misery,
 Passion and apathy, and glory and shame,
 Vain wisdom all, and false philosophy: 565
 Yet with a pleasing forcery could charm
 Pain for a while, or anguish; and excite
 Fallacious hope, or arm th' obdured breast
 With stubborn patience, as with triple steel.
 531 Another part, in squadrons and gross bands, 570
 On bold adventure to discover wide
 That dismal world; if any clime perhaps
 Might yield them easier habitation, bend
 535 Four ways their flying march, along the banks
 Of four infernal rivers, that disgorge 575
 Into the burning lake their baleful streams;
 Abhorred Styx, the flood of deadly hate;
 Sad Acheron, of sorrow black and deep;
 540 Cocytus, nam'd of lamentation loud
 Heard on the rueful stream; fierce Phlegeton, 580
 Whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage.
 For off from these a slow and silent stream,
 545 Lethe the river of oblivion rolls
 Her watry labyrinth; whereof who drinks,
 Forthwith his former state and being forgets, 585
 Forgets both joy and grief, pleasure and pain.
 Beyond this flood a frozen continent
 550 Lies dark and wild, beat with perpetual storms
 Of whirlwind and dire hail; which on firm land
 Thaws not, but gathers heap, and ruin seems 590

What

Of ancient pile; or else deep snow and ice,
 A gulf profound, as that Serbonian bog
 Betwixt Damiata and mount Casius old,
 Where armies whole have sunk: the parching air
 Burns froze, and cold performs th' effect of fire. 595
 Thither by harpy-footed furies hal'd
 At certain revolutions all the damn'd
 Are brought; and feel by turns the bitter change
 Of fierce extremes, extremes by change more fierce,
 From beds of raging fire to starve in ice 600
 Their soft ethereal warmth, and there to pine
 Immoveable, infix'd, and frozen round,
 Periods of time, thence hurried back to fire,
 They ferry over this Lethæan sound
 Both to and fro, their sorrow to augment, 605
 And wish and struggle as they pass, to reach
 The tempting stream, with one small drop to lose
 In sweet forgetfulness all pain and woe,
 All in one moment, and so near the brink:
 But fate withstands, and to oppose th' attempt 610
 Medusa with Gorgonian terror guards
 The ford, and of itself the water flies
 All taste of living wight, as once it fled
 The lip of Tantalus. Thus roving on
 In confus'd march forlorn, th' advent'rous bands 615
 With shudd'ring horror pale, and eyes aghast,
 View'd first their lamentable lot, and found
 No rest: through many a dark and dreary vale
 They pass'd, and many a region dolorous,
 O'er many a frozen, many a fiery Alp, 620
 Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades of death,
 A universe of death, which God by curse
 Created evil, for evil only good,
 Where all life dies, death lives, and nature breeds,
 Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things, 625
 Abominable, inutterable, and worse
 Than fables yet have feign'd, or fear conceiv'd,
 Gorgons, and Hydra's, and Chimera's dire.

Mean

Mean while the Adversary of God and Man;
 Satan, with thoughts inflam'd of highest design, 630
 Puts on swift wings, and tow'rd the gates of Hell
 Explores his solitary flight; sometimes
 He scours the right-hand coast; sometimes the left,
 Now shaves with level wing the deep; then soars
 Up to the fiery concave towering high 635
 As when far off at sea a fleet descri'd
 Hangs in the clouds, by equinoctial winds
 Close sailing from Bengala, or the isles
 Of Ternate and Tidore, whence merchants bring
 Their spicy drugs: they on the trading flood 640
 Through the wide Ethiopian, to the Cape
 Ply stemming nightly tow'rd the pole. So seem'd
 Far off the flying Fiend. At last appear
 Hell bounds high reaching to the horrid roof,
 And thrice threefold the gates; three folds were brass
 Three iron, three of adamantin rock, 646
 Impenetrable, impal'd with circling fire,
 Yet unconsum'd. Before the gates there sat
 On either side a formidable shape;
 The one seem'd woman to the waste, and fair, 650
 But ended foul in many a scaly fold,
 Voluminous and vast, a serpent arm'd
 With mortal sting: about her middle round
 A cry of hell-hounds never ceasing bark'd
 With wide Cerberian mouths full loud, and rung 655
 A hideous peal: yet, when they list, would creep,
 If ought disturb'd their noise, into her womb,
 And kennel there, yet there still bark'd, and howl'd
 Within, unseen. Far less abhor'd than these
 Vex'd Scylla bathing in the sea that parts 660
 Calabria from the hoarse Trinacrian shore:
 Nor uglier follow the night-hag, when, call'd
 In secret, riding through the air she comes,
 Lur'd with the smell of infant blood, to dance
 With Lapland witches, while the lab'ring Moon 665
 Eclipses at their charms. The other shape,

If shape it might be call'd that shape had none
 Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb,
 Or substance might be call'd that shadow seem'd,
 For each seem'd either; black it stood as Night, 670
 Fierce as ten Furies, terrible as Hell,
 And shook a dreadful dart; what seem'd his head
 The likeness of a Kingly crown had on.
 Satan was now at hand, and from his seat
 The monster moving onward came as fast 675
 With horrid strides. Hell trembled as he strode.
 Th' undaunted Fiend what this might be admir'd,
 Admir'd, not fear'd; God and his Son except,
 Created thing not valued he nor shunn'd;
 And with disdainful look thus first began. 680

Whence and what art thou, execrable shape,
 That dar'st, though grim and terrible, advance
 Thy miscreated front athwart my way
 To yonder gates? through them I mean to pass,
 That be assur'd, without leave ask'd of thee. 685
 Retire, or taste thy folly, and learn by proof,
 Hell-born; not to contend with spirits of Heav'n.

To whom the goblin full of wrath reply'd,
 Art thou that traitor-Angel, art thou He,
 Who first broke peace in Heav'n, and faith, till then
 Unbroken, and in proud rebellious arms 691
 Drew after him the third part of Heav'n's sons,
 Conjur'd against the Highest; for which both thou
 And they, outcast from God, are here condemn'd
 To waste eternal days in woe and pain? 695
 And reckon'st thou thyself with spirits of Heav'n,
 Hell-doom'd! and breath'st defiance here and scorn
 Where I reign King, and, to enrage thee more,
 Thy King and Lord? Back to thy punishment,
 False fugitive! and to thy speed add wings; 700
 Left with a whip of scorpions I pursue
 Thy lingering; or with one stroke of this dart
 Strange horror seize thee, and pangs unselt before.

So spake the grievly terror, and in shape,
 So speaking and so threatning, grew tenfold 703
 More dreadful and deform. On th' other side
 Incens'd with indignation Satan stood
 670 Unterrify'd, and like a comet burn'd,
 That fires the length of Ophiuchus huge
 In th' arctic sky, and from his horrid hair 710
 Shakes pestilence and war. Each at the head
 Level'd his deadly aim; their fatal hands
 675 No second stroke intend; and such a frown
 Each cast at th' other, as when two black clouds,
 With Heav'n's artill'ry fraught, come rattling on 715
 Over the Caspian; then stand front to front
 680 Hov'ring a space, till winds the signal blow
 To join their dark encounter in mid air:

So frown'd the mighty combatants, that Hell
 Grew darker at their frown: so match'd they stood:
 For never but once more was either like 721
 To meet so great a foe. And now great deeds
 Had been achiev'd, whereof all Hell had rung,
 Had not the snaky forceres that sat
 Fast by Hell-gate, and kept the fatal key, 725
 Ris'n, and with hideous outcry rush'd between.

O father! what intends thy hand, she cry'd,
 Against thy only son? What fury, O son,
 Possesses thee to bend that mortal dart
 Against thy father's head? and know'st for whom; 730
 For him who sits above, and laughs the while
 At thee ordain'd his drudge, to execute
 695 Whate'er his wrath, which he calls justice, bids;
 His wrath, which one day will destroy ye both.

She spacke, and at her words the hellish pest 735
 Forbore; then these to her Satan return'd.

So strange thy outcry, and thy words so strange
 Thou interposest, that my sudden hand
 Prevented spares to tell thee yet by deeds
 What it intends; till first I know of thee, 740
 What thing thou art, thus double-form'd; and why

In

In this infernal vale first met, thou call'st
 Me father, and that phantasm call'st my son:
 I know thee not, nor ever saw till now
 Sight more detestable than him, and thee. 745

T' whom thus the portress of hell-gate reply'd:
 Hast thou forgot me then, and do I seem
 Now in thine eye so foul? once deem'd so fair
 In Heav'n, when at th' assembly, and in sight
 Of all the Seraphim, with thee combin'd 750
 In bold conspiracy against Heav'n's King,
 All on a sudden miserable pain

Surpriz'd thee, dim thine eyes, and dizzy swum
 In darkness, while thy head flames thick and fast
 Threw forth, till on the left side op'ning wide, 755

Likest to thee in shape and count'nance bright,
 Then shining heav'nly fair, a Goddess arm'd,
 Out of thy head I sprung: amazement seiz'd
 All th' host of Heav'n; back they recoil'd afraid
 At first, and call'd me Sin; and for a sign 760

Portentous held me; but familiar grown,
 I pleas'd, and with attractive graces won
 The most averse, thee chiefly, who full oft,
 Thy self in me thy perfect image viewing,
 Becam'st inamour'd, and such joy thou took'st 765
 With me in secret, that my womb conceiv'd
 A growing burthen. Mean while war arose,
 And fields were fought in Heav'n; wherein remain'd,
 For what could else, to our almighty foe
 Clear victory; to our part loss and rout, 770

Through all the empyrean: down they fell
 Driv'n headlong from the pitch of Heaven, down
 Into this deep; and in the gen'ral fall
 I also: at which time this powerful key
 Into my hand was giv'n, with charge to keep 775
 These gates for ever shut, which none can pass
 Without my op'ning. Pensive here I sat
 Alone, but long I sat not, till my womb
 Pregnant by thee, and now excessive grown,

Pro-

Prodigious motion felt and rueful throes: 780
 At last this odious offspring whom thou seest,
 Thine own begotten, breaking violent way
 Tore through my entrails, that with fear and pain
 Distorted, all my nether shape thus grew
 Transform'd: but he my inbred enemy 785
 Forth issued, brandishing his fatal dart,
 Made to destroy: I fled, and cry'd out Death!
 Hell trembled at the hideous name, and sigh'd
 From all her caves, and back refounded, Death! 790
 I fled, but he pursued, though more, it seems,
 Inflam'd with lust than rage, and swifter far,
 Me overtook his mother, all dismay'd,
 And in embraces forcible and foul
 Ingendring with me, of that rape begot 795
 These yelling monsters, that with ceaseless cry
 Surround me, as thou saw'st, hourly conceiv'd
 And hourly born, with sorrow infinite
 To me; for when they list, into the womb
 That bred them they return, and howl and gnaw 800
 My bowels, their repast; then bursting forth
 Afresh with conscious terrors vex me round,
 That rest or intermission none I find.
 Before mine eyes in opposition sits
 Grim Death my son and foe; who sets them on, 805
 And me his parent would full soon devour
 For want of other prey, but that he knows
 His end with mine involv'd; and knows that I
 Should prove a bitter morsel, and his bane,
 Whenever that shall be; so Fate pronounc'd.
 But thou, O father! I forewarn thee, shun 810
 His deadly arrow; neither vainly hope
 To be invuln'able in those bright arms,
 Though temper'd heav'nly; for that mortal dint,
 Save he who reigns above, none can resist.

She finish'd, and the subtle Fiend his lore 815
 Soon learn'd, now milder, and thus answer'd smooth.

Dear

Dear daughter, since thou claim'st me for thy fire,
 And my fair son here show'st me, the dear pledge
 Of dalliance had with thee in Heav'n, and joys
 Theen sweet, now sad to mention, thro' dire change 820
 Befall'n us unforeseen, unthought of; know
 I come no enemy, but to set free
 From out this dark and dismal house of pain
 Both him and thee, and all the heav'nly host
 Of spirits that, in our just pretences arm'd, 825
 Fell with us from on high; from them I go
 This uncouth errand sole; and one for all
 Myself expose, with lonely steps to tread
 Th' unfounded deep, and through the void immense
 To search with wand'ring quest a place foretold 830
 Should be, and, by concurring signs, ere now
 Created vast and round, a place of bliss
 In the pourlieus of Heav'n, and therein plac'd
 A race of upstart creatures, to supply
 Perhaps our vacant room; though more remov'd, 835
 Lest Heav'n surcharg'd with potent multitude
 Might hap to move new broils. Be this or ought
 Than this more secret now design'd, I haste
 To know, and this once known, shall soon return,
 And bring ye to the place where Thou and Death 840
 Shall dwell at ease, and up and down unseen
 Wing silently the buxom air, imbalm'd
 With odors: there ye shall be fed, and fill'd
 Immeasurably, all things shall be your prey.

He ceas'd, for both seem'd highly pleas'd, and Death
 Grinn'd horrible a ghastly smile, to hear 846
 His famine should be fill'd, and blest his maw
 Destin'd to that good hour: no less rejoic'd
 His mother bad, and thus bespake her fire:

The key of this infernal pit by due, 850
 And by command of Heav'n's all-powerful king
 I keep; by him forbidden to unlock
 These adamant gates; against all force
 Death ready stands to interpose his dart,

Fear-

Fearless to be o'ermatch'd by living might, 855
 But what owe I to his commands above
 Who hates me, and hath hither thrust me down
 Into this gloom of Tartarus profound,
 To fit in hateful office here confin'd,
 Inhabitant of Heav'n, and heav'nly-born, 860
 Here in perpetual agony and pain,

With terrors and with clamors compass'd round
 Of mine own brood, that on my bowels feed?
 Thou art my father, thou my author, thou
 My being gav'st me; whom should I obey, 865
 But thee? whom follow? thou wilt bring me soon
 To that new world of light and bliss, among
 The Gods who live at ease, where I shall reign
 At thy right hand voluptuous, as befits
 Thy daughter and thy darling, without end. 870

Thus saying, from her side the fatal key,
 Sad instrument of all our woe! she took;
 And towards the gate rolling her bestial train,
 Forthwith the huge Portcullis high up-drew;
 Which but her self, not all the Stygian Pow'rs, 875
 Could once have mov'd: then in the key-hole turns

Th' intricate wards, and every bolt and bar
 Of massy iron, or solid rock, with ease
 Unfastens: on a sudden open fly
 With impetuous recoil and jarring sound 880

Th' infernal doors, and on their hinges grate
 Harsh thunder, that the lowest bottom shook
 Of Erebus. She open'd, but to shut
 Excell'd her pow'r; the gates wide open stood,
 That with extended wings a banner'd host, 885

Under spread ensings marching, might pass through
 With horse and chariots rank'd in loose array;
 So wide they stood, and like a furnace mouth
 Cast forth redounding smoke and ruddy flame!
 Before their eyes in sudden view appear 890

The secrets of the hoary deep, a dark
 Unlimitable ocean, without bound,

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Fear-

Without dimension, where length, breadth, and height,
 And time, and place are lost; where eldest Night
 And Chaos, ancestors of Nature, hold 895
 Eternal anarchy, amidst the noise
 Of endless wars, and by confusion stand.
 For hot, cold, moist, and dry, four champions fierce,
 Strive here for mastery, and to battel bring
 Their embryon atoms; they around the flag 900
 Of each his faction, in their several clans,
 Light-arm'd or heavy, sharp, smooth, swift or slow,
 Swarm populous, un-number'd as the sands
 Of Barca or Cyrene's torrid soil,
 Levied to side with warring winds, and poise 905
 Their lighter wings. To whom these most adhere,
 He rules a moment; Chaos umpire sits,
 And by decision more embroils the fray
 By which he reigns: next him high arbiter
 Chance governs all. Into this wild abyss, 910
 The womb of Nature, and perhaps her grave,
 Of neither sea, nor shore, nor air, nor fire,
 But all these in their pregnant causes mix'd
 Confus'dly, and which thus must ever fight,
 Unless th' almighty Maker them ordain 915
 His dark materials to create more worlds;
 Into this wild abyss the wary Fiend
 Stood on the brink of Hell, and look'd a while,
 Pond'ring his voyage; for no narrow frith
 He had to cross: nor was his ear less peal'd 920
 With noises loud and ruinous, to compare
 Great things with small, than when Bellona storms,
 With all her batt'ring engines bent to rase
 Some capital city; or less than if this frame
 Of Heav'n were falling, and these elements 925
 In mutiny had from her axle torn
 The stedfast earth. At last his sail-broad vans
 He spreads for flight, and in the surging smoke
 Uplifted spurns the ground: thence many a league,
 As in a cloudy chair, ascending rides 930

Auda-

Audacious; but that feat soon failing, meets
 A vast vacuity: all unawares
 Flutt'ring his pennons vain, plumb down he drops
 Ten thousand fathom deep, and to this hour
 Down had been falling, had not by ill chance 935
 The strong rebuff of some tumultuous cloud,
 Instinct with fire and nitre, hurried him
 As many miles aloft: that fury stay'd,
 Quench'd in a boggy Syrtis, neither sea,
 Nor good dry land: nigh founde'r'd on he fares, 940
 Treading the crude consistence, half on foot,
 Half flying; behoves him now both oar and sail.
 As when a gryphon through the wilderness
 With winged course, o'er hill or moory dale,
 Pursues the Arimaspiæ, who by stealth 945
 Had from his wakeful custody purloin'd
 The guarded gold: so eagerly the Fiend
 O'er bog, or steep, through strait, rough, dense, or rare,
 With head, hands, wings or feet pursues his way,
 And swims, or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flies: 950
 At length a universal hubbub wild
 Of stunning sounds and voices all confus'd,
 Borne through the hallow dark, assaults his ear
 With loudest vehemence: thither he plies,
 Undaunted to meet there whatever Power 955
 Or spirit of the nethermost abyss
 Might in that noise reside, of whom to ask
 Which way the nearest coast of darkness lies
 Bordering on light; when strait behold the throne
 Of Chaos, and his dark pavilion spread 960
 Wide on the wasteful deep; with him inthron'd
 Sate sable-vested Night, eldest of things,
 The consort of his reign; and by them stood
 Orcus and Ades, and the dreaded name
 Of Demogorgon: Rumor next and Chance, 965
 And Tumult and Confusion all imbroil'd,
 And Discord with a thousand various mouths.
 T' whom Satan turning boldly, thus. — Ye Powers,
 D And

And spirits of this nethermost abyſs,
 Chaos and ancient Night, I come no ſpy, 970
 With purpoſe to explore or to diſturb
 The ſecrets of your realm, but by constraint
 Wand'ring this darkſome deſart, as my way
 Lies through your ſpacious empire up to light,
 Alone, and without guide, half loſt, I ſeek 975
 What readieſt path leads where your gloomy bounds
 Conſine with Heav'n: or if ſome other place,
 From your dominion won, th' ethereal king
 Poſſeſſes lately, thither to arrive
 I travel this profound, direct my courſe; 980
 Directed no mean recompenſe it brings
 To your behoof, if I that region loſt,
 All uſurpation thence expell'd, reduce
 To her original darkneſs, and your ſway,
 Which is my preſent journey, and once more 985
 Ereſt the ſtandard there of ancient Night;
 Yours be th' advantage all, mine the revenge.
 Thus Satan; and him thus the Anarch old,
 With falt'ring ſpeech and viſage incompoſ'd,
 Answer'd. I know thee, ſtranger, who thou art, 990
 That mighty leading Angel, who of late
 Made head againſt Heav'n's King, though overthrown.
 I ſaw and heard, for ſuch a num'rous hoſt
 Fled not in ſilence through the frighted deep
 With ruin upon ruin, rout on rout, 995
 Confuſion worſe confounded: and Heav'n gates
 Pour'd out by millions her victorious bands
 Purſuing. I upon my frontiers here
 Keep reſidence; if all I can will ſerve
 That little which is left ſo to defend, 1000
 Encroach'd on ſtill through our intestine broils,
 Weakning the ſcepter of old Night: firſt Hell,
 Your dungeon, ſtretching far and wide beneath;
 Now lately Heav'n and Earth, another world,
 Hung o'er my realm, link'd in a golden chain, 1005
 To that ſide Heav'n from whence your legions fell:

If

If that way be your walk, you have not far;
So much the nearer danger: go and speed!
Havoc, and spoil, and ruin are my gain.

He ceas'd; and Satan staid not to reply,
But glad that now his sea should find a shore,

With fresh alacrity and force renew'd
Springs upward like a pyramid of fire
Into the wild expanse, and through the shock
Of fighting elements, on all sides round
Environ'd, wins his way: harder beset

And more endanger'd, than when Argo pass'd
Through Bosphorus, betwixt the jutting rocks;
Or when Ulysses on the larboard shunn'd
Charybdis; and by th' other whirlpool steer'd.
So he with difficulty and labor hard

Mov'd on, with difficulty and labor he;
But he once past, soon after when man fell,
Strange alteration! Sin and Death amain
Following his track, such was the will of Heaven!
Pav'd after him a broad and beaten way,

Over the dark abyss, whose boiling gulf
Tamely endur'd a bridge of wondrous length,
From Hell continued reaching th' utmost orb
Of this frail world; by which the spirits perverse
With easy intercourse pass to and fro

To tempt or punish mortals, except whom
God and good Angels guard by special grace.

But now at last the sacred influence
Of light appears, and from the walls of Heaven
Shoots far into the bosom of dim Night

A glimmering dawn: here Nature first begins
Her farthest verge, and Chaos to retire
As from her outmost works a brocken foe
With tumult less and with less hostile din;

That Satan with less toil, and now with ease
Waits on the calmer wave by dubious light,
And like a weather-beaten vessel holds
Gladly the port, though shrouds and tackle torn:

Or in the emptier waste, resembling air; 1045
 Weighs his spread wings, at leisure to behold
 Far off th' empyreal Heav'n, extended wide
 In circuit, undetermin'd square or round:
 With opal tow'rs, and battlements adorn'd
 Of living saphir, once his native seat; 1050
 And fast by hanging in a golden chain
 This pendent world, in bigness as a star
 Of smallest magnitude, close by the moon.
 Thither full fraught with mischievous revenge,
 Accurs'd, and in a curfed hour he hies. 1055

The End of the Second Book.

B O O K III.

Hail holy Light, offspring of Heav'n first-born,
 Or of th' Eternal coeternal beam
 May I exprefs thee unblam'd? since God is light,
 And never but in unapproach'd light,
 Dwelt from eternity, dwelt then in thee,
 Bright effluence of bright effence increate,
 Or hear'st thou rather pure ethereal stream,
 Whose fountain who shall tell? before the Sun,
 Before the heav'ns thou wert, and at the voice
 Of God, as with a mantle didst invest
 The rising world of waters dark and deep,
 Won from the void and formless infinite.
 Thee I re-visit now with bolder wing,
 Escap'd the Stygian pool, though long detain'd
 In that obscure sojourn; while in my flight 15
 Through utter and through middle darkness borne
 With other notes than to th' Orphëan lyre,
 I sung of Chaos and eternal Night;
 Taught by the heav'nly Muse to venture down
 The dark descent, and up to re-ascend, 20
 Tho' hard and rare. Thee I revisit safe,
 And feel thy sov'reign vital lamp; but thou

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Revisit'st not these eyes, that roll in vain
 To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn;
 So thick a *drop serene* hath quench'd their orbs, 25
 Or dim suffusion veil'd. Yet not the more
 Cease I to wander, where the Muses haunt,
 Clear spring, or shady grove, or sunny hill,
 Smit with the love of sacred song: but chief
 Thee, Sion, and the flowry brooks beneath, 30
 That wash thy hallow'd feet, and warbling flow,
 Nightly I visit: nor sometimes forget
 Those other two equal'd with me in fate,
 So were I equal'd with them in renown,
 Blind Thamyras and blind Maeonides, 35
 And Tiresias, and Phineus Prophets old.
 Then feed on thoughts, that voluntary move
 Harmonious numbers; as the wakeful bird
 Sings darkling, and in shadiest covert hid
 Tunes her nocturnal note. Thus with the year 40
 Seasons return, but not to me returns
 Day, or the sweet approach of ev'n or morn,
 Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
 Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine:
 But cloud instead, and ever-during dark 45
 Surrounds me; from the chearful ways of men
 Cut off; and for the book of knowledge fair
 Presented with an universal blank
 Of nature's works, to me expung'd and ras'd,
 And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out. 50
 So much the rather thou, coelestial Light,
 Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers
 Irradiate; there plant eyes, all mist from thence
 Purge and disperse; that I may see and tell
 Of things invisible to mortal sight. 55

Now had th' almighty Father from above,
 From the pure empyrean where he sits
 High thron'd above all height, bent down his eye,
 His own works and their works at once to view;
 About him all the Sanctities of Heaven 60

Stood

Stood thick as stars, and from his sight receiv'd
 Beatitude past utterance: on his right
 The radiant image of his glory sat,
 His only Son. On earth he first beheld
 Our two first parents, yet the only two 65
 Of mankind, in the happy garden plac'd,
 Reaping immortal fruits of joy and love,
 Uninterrupted joy, unrival'd love
 In blissful solitude. He then survey'd
 Hell and the gulf between, and Satan there 70
 Coasting the wall of Heav'n on this side Night,
 In the dun air sublime, and ready now
 To stoop with wearied wings, and willing feet
 On the bare outside of this world, that seem'd
 Firm land imbosom'd, without firmament, 75
 Uncertain which, in ocean or in air.
 Him God beholding from his prospect high,
 Wherein past, present, future he beholds,
 Thus to his only Son foreseeing spake.
 Only begotten Son, see'st thou what rage 80
 Transports our Adversary? whom no bounds
 Prescrib'd, no bars of Hell, nor all the chains
 Heap'd on him there, nor yet the main abyss
 Wide interrupt can hold; so bent he seems
 On desperate revenge, that shall redound 85
 Upon his own rebellious head. And now
 Through all restraint broke loose he wings his way
 Not far off Heav'n, in the percincts of light,
 Directly towards the new crated world,
 And Man there plac'd; with purpose to assay 90
 If him by force he can destroy, or worse,
 By some false guile pervert, and shall pervert,
 For man will hearken to his glozing lies,
 And easily transgress the sole command,
 Sole pledge of his obedience: so will fall, 95
 He and his faithless progeny. Whose fault?
 Whose but his own? Ingrate! he had of me
 All he could have: I made him just and right,

Suf.

Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.
 Such I created all th' ethereal Powers 100
 And Spirits, both them who stood and them who fall'd;
 Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell.
 Not free, what proof could they have giv'n sincere
 Of true allegiance, constant faith or love,
 Where only what they needs must do appear'd, 105
 Not what they would? what praise could they receive?
 What pleasure I from such obedience paid,
 When will and reason, reason also is choice,
 Useless and vain, of freedom both despoil'd,
 Made passive both, had serv'd necessity, 110
 Not me? They therefore as to right belong'd,
 So were created, nor can justly accuse
 Their maker, or their making, or their fate,
 As if predestination over-rul'd
 Their will, dispos'd by absolute decree 115
 Or high foreknowledge. They themselves decreed
 Their own revolt, not I; if I foreknew,
 Foreknowledge had no influence on their fault,
 Which had no less prov'd certain unforeknown.
 So without least impulse or shadow of fate, 120
 Or ought by me immutably foreseen,
 They trespass, authors to themselves in all,
 Bot what they judge and what they choofe; for so
 I form'd them free, and free they must remain,
 'Till they inthrall themselves; I else must change 125
 Their nature, and revoke the high decree
 Unchangeable, eternal, which ordain'd
 Their freedom, they themselves ordain'd their fall.
 The first sort by their own suggestion fell,
 Self-tempted, self-deprav'd: Man falls, deceiv'd 130
 By th' other first: Man therefore shall find grace,
 The other none: in mercy and justice both,
 Through Heav'n and Earth, so shall my glory excel,
 But mercy first and last shall brightest shine.
 Thus while God spake, ambrosial fragrance fill'd 135
 All Heav'n, and in the blessed Spirits elect

Sense of new joy ineffable diffus'd:

Beyond compare the Son of God was seen

Most glorious; in him all his Father shone

Substantially express'd; and in his face

140

Divine compassion visibly appear'd

Love without end, and without measure grace,

Which uttering, thus he to his Father spake.

O Father, gracious was that word which clos'd

Thy sov'reign sentence, that man should find grace: 145

For which both Heav'n and earth shall high extol

Thy praises, with th' innumerable sound

Of hymns and sacred songs, wherewith thy throne

Encompass'd shall resound thee ever blest.

For should Man finally be lost, should Man

150

Thy creature late so lov'd, thy youngest son,

Fall circumvented thus by fraud, though join'd

With his own folly? that be from thee far,

That far be from thee, Father, who art judge

Of all things made, and judgest only right.

155

Or shall the Adversary thus obtain

His end, and frustrate thine? shall he fulfil

His malice, and thy goodness bring to nought,

Or proud return, though to his heavier doom,

Yet with revenge accomplish'd, and to Hell

160

Draw after him the whole race of mankind,

By him corrupted? or wilt thou thyself

Abolish thy creation, and unmake

For him, what for thy glory thou hast made?

So should thy goodness and thy greatness both

165

Be question'd, and blasphem'd without defence.

To whom the great Creator thus reply'd.

O Son, in whom my soul hath chief delight,

Son of my bosom, Son who art alone

My word, my wisdom, and effectual might,

170

All hast thou spoken as my thoughts are, all

As my eternal purpose hath decreed.

Man shall not quite be lost, but sav'd who will,

Yet not of will in him, but grace in me

Freely

Freely vouchsaf'd: once more I will renew 175
 His lapied pow'rs, though forfeit and intrall'd
 By sin to foul exorbitant desires;
 Upheld by me, yet once more he shall stand
 On even ground against his mortal foe,
 By me upheld, that he may know how frail 180
 His fall'n condition is, and to me owe
 All his deliverance, and to none but me.
 Some I have chosen of peculiar grace
 Elect above the rest: so is my will:
 The rest shall hear me call, and oft be warn'd 185
 Their sinful state, and to appease betimes
 Th' incens'd Deity, while offer'd grace
 Invites: for I will clear their senses dark,
 What may suffice, and soften stony hearts
 To pray, repent, and bring obedience due. 190
 To pray'r, repentance, and obedience due,
 Though but endeavour'd with sincere intent,
 Mine ear shall not be slow, mine eye not shut.
 And I will place within them as a guide
 My umpire conscience: whom if they will hear, 195
 Light after light well us'd they shall attain,
 And to the end persisting, safe arrive.
 This my long sufferance, and my day of grace,
 They who neglect and scorn, shall never taste;
 But hard be harden'd, blind be blinded more, 200
 That they may stumble on, and deeper fall:
 And none but such from mercy I exclude.
 But yet all is not done: Man disobeying,
 Disloyal breaks his fealty, and sins
 Against the high supremacy of Heav'n, 205
 Affecting God-head, and so losing all,
 To expiate his treason hath nought left,
 But to destruction sacred and devote,
 He with his whole posterity must die,
 Die he or justice must; unless for him 210
 Some other able, and as willing, pay
 The rigid satisfaction, death for death.

Say heav'nly Pow'rs, where shall we find such love?
Which of ye will be mortal to redeem
Man's mortal crime, and just, th' unjust to save? 215
Dwells in all Heaven charity so dear?

He ask'd, but all the heav'nly quire stood mute,
And silence was in Heav'n: on man's behalf
Patron or intercessor none appear'd,
Much less that durst upon his own head draw 220
The deadly forfeiture, and ransom set.
And now without redemption all mankind
Must have been lost, adjudg'd to Death and Hell
By doom severe, had not the Son of God,
In whom the fulness dwells of love divine, 225
His dearest mediation thus renew'd.

Father, thy word is past, Man shall find grace;
And shall grace not find means, that finds her way,
The speediest of thy winged messengers,
To visit all thy creatures, and to all 230
Comes unprevented, unimplor'd, unfought?
Happy for Man, so coming; he her aid
Can never seek, once dead in sins and lost;
Atonement for himself or offering meet,
Indebted, and undone, hath none to bring: 235
Behold me then; me for him, life for life
I offer, on me let thine anger fall;
Account me Man: I for his sake will leave
Thy bosom, and this glory next to thee
Freely put off, and for him lastly die 240
Well pleas'd, on me let Death wreak all his rage;
Under his gloomy pow'r I shall not long
Lie vanquish'd; thou hast giv'n me to possess
Life in myself for ever; by thee I live,
Though new to Death I yield, and am his due 245
All that of me can die: yet that debt paid,
Thou wilt not leave me in the loathsome grave
His prey, nor suffer my unspotted soul
For ever with corruption there to dwell;
But I shall rise victorious, and subdue 250
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My vanquisher, spoil'd of his vaunted spoil;
Death his death's wound shall then receive, and stoop
Inglorious, of his mortal sting disarm'd.

I through the ample air in triumph high
Shall lead Hell captive, maugre Hell; and show 255

The Pow'rs of darkness bound. Thou at the fight
Pleas'd, out of Heaven shalt look down and smile,

While by thee rais'd I ruin all my foes,
Death last, and with his carcass glut the grave:

Then with the multitude of my redeem'd 260
Shall enter Heav'n long absent, and return,

Father, to see thy face, wherein no cloud
Of anger shall remain, but peace assur'd

And reconciliation; wrath shall be no more
Thenceforth, but in thy presence joy entire. 265

His words here ended, but his meek aspect
Silent yet spake, and breath'd immortal love

To mortal men, above which only shone
Filial obedience: as a sacrifice

Glad to be offer'd, he attends the will 270
Of his great Father. O Admiration seisd

All Heav'n, what this might mean, and whither tend
Wond'ring; but soon th' Almighty thus reply'd.

O Thou in Heav'n and Earth the only peace
Found out for mankind under wrath, O Thou 275

My sole complacence! well thou know'st how dear
To me are all my works, nor Man the least

Though last created; that for him I spare
Thee from my bosom and right hand, to save,

By losing thee a while, the whole race lost. 280
Thou therefore, whom thou only canst redeem,

Their nature also to thy nature join;
And be thyself man among men on earth,

Made flesh, when time shall be, of virgin-feed,
By wondrous birth: be thou in Adam's room 285

The head of all mankind, though Adam's son.
As in him perish all men, so in thee,

As from a second root, shall be restor'd
My

As many as are restor'd, without thee none.
 His crime makes guilty all his sons; thy merit **290**
 Imputed shall absolve them who renounce
 Their own both righteous and unrighteous deeds:
 And live in thee transplanted, and from thee
 Receive new life. So Man, as is most just,
 Shall satisfy for man, be judg'd and die; **295**
 And dying rise, and rising with him raise
 His brethren, ransom'd with his own dear life.
 So heav'nly love shall outdo hellish hate,
 Giving to death, and dying to redeem,
 So dearly to redeem what hellish hate **300**
 So easily destroy'd, and still destroys
 In those who, when they may, accept not grace.
 Nor shalt thou, by descending to assume
 Man's nature, lessen or degrade thine own.
 Because thou hast, tho' thron'd in highest bliss **305**
 Equal to God, and equally enjoying
 God-like fruition, quitted all to save
 A world from utter loss, and hast been found
 By merit more than birthright Son of God,
 Found worthiest to be so by being good, **310**
 Far more than great or high; because in thee
 Love hath abounded more than glory abounds,
 Therefore thy humiliation shall exalt
 With thee thy manhood also to this throne;
 Here shalt thou sit incarnate, here shalt reig'n **315**
 Both God and Man, Son both of God and Man,
 Anointed universal king; all power
 I give thee; reign for ever, and assume
 Thy merits: under thee as head supreme
 Thrones, Principedoms, Powers, Dominions I reduce:
 All knees to thee shall bow, of them that 'bide **321**
 In Heav'n, or Earth, or under Earth in Hell,
 When thou attended gloriously from Heav'n
 Shalt in the sky appear, and from thee send
 The summoning Arch-Angels to proclaim **325**
 Thy dread tribunal; forthwith from all winds

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The living, and forthwith the cited dead
 Of all past ages to the general doom
 Shall hasten, such a peal shall rouse their sleep.
 Then all thy saints assembled, thou shalt judge
 Bad men and Angels, they arraign'd shall sink
 Beneath thy sentence; Hell, her numbers full,
 Thenceforth shall be for ever shut. Mean while
 The world shall burn, and from her ashes spring
 New Heav'n and Earth, wherein the just shall dwell,
 And after all their tribulations long
 See golden days, fruitful of golden deeds,
 With joy and love triumphing, and fair truth,
 Then thou thy regal sceptre shalt lay by,
 For regal sceptre then no more shall need,
 God shall be all in all. But all ye Gods,
 Adore him, who to compass all this dies,
 Adore the Son, and honor him as men

No sooner had th' Almighty ceas'd, but all
 The multitude of Angels with a shout
 Loud as from numbers without number, sweet
 As from blest voices, uttering joy, Heav'n rung
 With jubilee, and loud hosanna's fill'd
 Th' eternal regions. Lowly reverent
 Tow'rd's either throne they bow, and to the ground
 With solemn adoration down they cast
 Their crowns, inwove with amarant and gold,
 Immortal amarant! a flow'r which once
 In Paradise fast by the tree of life
 Began to bloom; but soon for man's offence
 To Heav'n remov'd, where first it grew, there grows,
 And flow'rs aloft shading the fount of life,
 And where the river of bliss thro' midst of Heaven
 Rolls o'er Elytian flow'rs her amber stream:
 With these that never fade the spirits elect
 Bind their resplendent locks, inwreath'd with beams,
 Now in loose garlands thick thrown off the bright
 Pavement, that like a sea of jasper shone,
 Impurpled with coelestial roses smil'd,

Then

Then crown'd again, their golden harps they took, 365
 Harps ever tun'd, that glitt'ring by their side
 Like quivers hung, and with preamble sweet
 Of charming symphony they introduce
 Their sacred song, and waken raptures high,
 No voice exempt; no voice but well could join 370
 Melodious part, such concord is in Heav'n.

Thee, Father, first they sung, Omnipotent,
 Immutable, Immortal, Infinite,
 Eternal King; Thee Author of all Being,
 Fountain of Light, thyself invisible 375

Amidst the glorious brightness where thou sit'st
 Thron'd inaccessible, but when thou shad'st
 The full blaze of thy beams, and thro' a cloud
 Drawn round about thee like a radiant shrine,
 Dark with excessive bright thy skirts appear, 380

Yet dazle Heav'n, that brightest Seraphim
 Approach not, but with both wings veil their eyes.

Thee next they sung of all creation first,
 Begotten Son, Divine similitude!

In whose conspicuous count'nance, without cloud 385
 Made visible, th' almighty Father shines,

Whom else no creature can behold: on thee
 Impress'd, th' effulgence of his glory abides;

Transfus'd on thee him ample Spirit rests.

He Heav'n of Heav'ns, and all the pow'rs therein 390

By thee created; and by thee drew down
 Th' aspiring Dominations. Thou that day

Thy Father's dreadful thunder didst not spare,
 Nor stop thy flaming chariot wheels, that shook

Heav'n's everlasting frame, while o'er the necks 395
 Thou drow'st of warring Angels disarray'd.

Back from pursuit thy Pow'rs with loud acclame
 Thee only extoll'd, Son of thy Father's might,

To execute fierce vengeance on his foes.

Not so on man: him thro' their malice fall'n, 400

Father of mercy and grace! thou didst not doom
 So strictly; but much more to pity incline.

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No sooner did thy dear and only Son,
 Perceive thee purpos'd not to doom frail man
 So strictly, but much more to pity inclin'd,
 He to appease thy wrath, and end the strife
 Of mercy and justice in thy face discern'd,
 Regardless of the bliss wherein he sat
 Second to thee, offer'd himself to die
 For man's offence. O unexampled love!
 Love no where to be found less than Divine!
 Hail Son of God, Saviour of men! thy name
 Shall be the copious matter of my song
 Henceforth, and never shall my harp thy praise
 Forget, nor from thy Father's praise disjoin.
 Thus they in Heav'n, above the starry sphere,
 Their happy hours in joy and hymning spent.
 Mean while upon the firm opacous globe
 Of this round wold, whose first convex divides
 The luminous inferior orbs inclos'd
 From Chaos, and th' inroad of Darkness old,
 Satan alighted walks. A globe far off
 It seem'd, now seems a boundless continent
 Dark, waste, and wild, under the frown of Night
 Starless expos'd, and ever-threat'ning storms
 Of Chaos blustering round, inclement sky!
 Save on that side which from the well of Heaven,
 Tho' distant far, some small reflection gains
 Of glimmering air, less vex'd with tempest loud.
 Here walk'd the Fiend at large in spacious field.
 As when a Vultur on Imaus bred,
 Whose snowy ridge the roving Tartar bounds,
 Dissodging from a region scarce of prey
 To gorge the flesh of lambs, or yeanling kids,
 On hills where flocks are fed, flies tow'rd the springs
 Of Ganges or Hydaspes, Indian streams;
 But in his way lights on the barren plains
 Of Sericana, where Chineses drive
 With sails and wind their cany waggons light:
 So on this windy sea of land, the Fiend
 Walk'd

Walk'd up and down alone, bent on his prey;
 Alone, for other creature in this place
 Living or lifeless to be found was none;
 None yet, but store hereafter from the earth
 Up hither like aerial vapors flew, 445
 Of all things transitory and vain, when sin
 With vanity had fill'd the works of men:
 Both all things vain, and all who in vain things
 Built their fond hopes of glory or lasting fame,
 Or happiness in this or th' other life: 450
 All who have their reward on earth, the fruits
 Of painful superstition and blind zeal,
 Nought seeking but the praise of men, here find
 Fit retribution, empty as their deeds:
 All th' unaccomplish'd works of Nature's hand, 455
 Abortive, monstrous, or unkindly mix'd,
 Dissolv'd on earth, fleet hither, and in vain,
 Till final dissolution, wander here,
 Not in the neighb'ring moon, as some have dream'd;
 Those argent fields more likely habitants, 460
 Translated Saints, or middle Spirits hold
 Betwixt th' angelical and human kind.
 Hither, of ill-join'd sons and daughters born,
 First from the ancient world those giants came,
 With many a vain exploit, tho' then renown'd: 465
 The builders next of Babel on the plain
 Of Sennaar, and still with vain design
 New Babels, had they wherewithal, would build:
 Others came single; he who to be deem'd
 A God, leap'd fondly into Aetna flames, 470
 Empedocles: and he who to enjoy
 Plato's Elysium, leap'd into the Sea,
 Cleombrotus: and many more too long,
 Embryoes and idiots, Erémits, and Friars
White, Black and Gray, with all their trumpery. 475
 Here Pilgrims roam, that stray'd so far to seek
 In Golgotha him dead, who lives in Heav'n;
 And they who, to be sure of Paradise,

Dying

Dying put on the weeds of Dominic,
 Or in Franciscan think to pass disguis'd;
 They pass the Planets seven, and pass the fix'd,
 And that chryselline sphere whose ballance weighs
 The trepidation talk'd, and that first mov'd;
 And now Saint Peter at Heav'n's wicket seems
 To wait them with his keys, and now at foot
 Of Heav'n's ascent they lift their feet, when lo!
 A violent cross-wind from either coast
 Blows them transverse, ten thousand leagues awry
 Into the devious air: then might ye see
 Cows, hoods, and habits, with their wearers tost
 And flutter'd into rags; then reliques, beads,
 Indulgences, Dispenses, Pardons, Bulls,
 The sport of winds. All these upwhirl'd aloft
 Fly o'er the backside of the world far off
 Into a Limbo large and broad, since call'd
 The Paradise of Fools, to few unknown
 Long after: now unpeopled; and untrod.
 All this dark globe the Fiend found as he pass'd,
 And long he wander'd, till at last a gleam
 Of dawning light turn'd thither-ward in haste
 His travel'd steps; far distant he descries
 Ascending by degrees magnificent
 Up to the wall of Heav'n a structure high;
 At top whereof, but far more rich appear'd
 The work as of a kingly palace-gate,
 With frontispiece of diamond and gold
 Embellish'd; thick with sparkling orient gems
 The portal shone, inimitable on earth
 By model, or by shading pencil drawn.
 The stairs were such as whereon Jacob saw
 Angels ascending and descending; bands
 Of guardians bright, when he from Esau fled
 To Padan-Aram, in the field of Luz,
 Dreaming by night under the open sky,
 And waking cry'd, *This is the gate of Heav'n.*
 Each stair mysteriously was meant, nor stood

Dying

E

There

There always, but drawn up to Heav'n sometimes
 Viewless; and underneath a bright sea flow'd
 Of jasper, or of liquid pearl, whereon
 Who after came from earth, sailing arriv'd, 520
 Wafted by Angels, or flew o'er the lake
 Rap'd in a chariot drawn by fiery steeds.
 The stairs were then let down, whether to dare
 The Fiend by easy ascent, or aggravate
 His sad exclusion from the doors of bliss: 525
 Direct against which open'd from beneath,
 Just o'er the blissful seat of Paradise,
 A passage down to th' earth, a passage wide,
 Wider by far than that of after-times
 Over mount Sion, and, though that were large, 530
 Over the Promis'd Land to God so dear,
 By which, to visit oft those happy tribes,
 On high behests his Angels to and fro
 Pass'd frequent, and his eye with choice regard,
 From Paneas the fount of Jordan's flood 535
 To Beersaba, where the Holy Land
 Borders on Egypt and th' Arabian shores,
 So wide the opening seem'd, where bounds were set
 To darkness, such as bound the ocean wave.
 Satan from hence, now on the lower stair 540
 That scal'd by steps of gold to Heaven gate,
 Looks down with wonder at the sudden view
 Of all this world at once. As when a scout
 Thro' dark and desert ways with peril gone
 All night, at last by break of chearful dawn 545
 Obtains the brow of some high-climbing hill,
 Which to his eye discovers unaware
 The goodly prospect of some foreign land
 First seen, or some renown'd metropolis
 With glistering spires and pinnacles adorn'd, 550
 Which now the rising Sun gilds with his beams:
 Such wonder feis'd, though after Heaven seen,
 The spirit malign; but much more envy-feis'd
 At sight of all this world beheld so fair.

Round

Round he surveys, and well might, where he stood
 So high above the circling canopy 556
 Of night's extended shade, from eastern point
 Of Libra, to the fleecy star that bears
 Andromeda far off Atlantic seas
 Beyond th' horizon: then from pole to pole 560
 He views in breadth, and without longer pause
 Down right into the world's first region throws
 His flight precipitant, and winds with ease
 Through the pure marble air his oblique way
 Amongst innumerable stars, that shone 565
 Stars distant, but nigh hand seem'd other worlds;
 Or other worlds they seem'd, or happy isles,
 Like those Hesperian gardens sam'd of old,
 Fortunate fields, and groves, and flow'ry vales,
 Thrice happy isles, but who dwelt happy there 570
 He stay'd not to inquire. Above them all
 The golden sun, in splendor likest Heav'n,
 Allur'd his eye: thither his course he bends
 Through the calm firmament: but up or down,
 By centre, or eccentric, hard to tell, 575
 Or longitude, where the great luminary
 Aloof the vulgar constellations thick,
 That from his lordly eye keep distance due,
 Dispenses light from far; they as they move
 Their starry dance in numbers that compute 580
 Days, months and years, tow'rd's his all-cheering lamp
 Turn swift their various motions, or are turn'd
 By his magnetic beam, that gently warms
 The universe, and to each inward part
 With gentle penetration, though unseen, 585
 Shoots invisible virtue even to the deep;
 So wondrously was set his station bright.
 There lands the Fiend, a spot like which perhaps
 Astronomer in the sun's lucent orb
 Through his glaz'd optic tube yet never saw. 590
 The place he found beyond expression bright,
 Compar'd with ought on earth, metal or stone:

Not all parts like, but all alike inform'd
 With radiant light, as glowing iron with fire;
 If metal, part seem'd gold, part silver clear: 595
 If stone, carbuncle most or chrysolite,
 Ruby or topaz, or the twelve that shone
 In Aaron's breast-plate: and a stone besides,
 Imagin'd rather oft than elsewhere seen,
 That stone, or like to that, which here below 600
 Philosophers in vain so long have sought,
 In vain, though by their pow'rful art they bind
 Volatil Hermes, and call up unbound
 In various shapes old Proteus from the sea,
 Drain'd through a limbec to his native form. 605
 What wonder then if fields and regions here
 Breathe forth elixir pure, and rivers run
 Potable gold, when with one virtuous touch
 Th' arch-chemic fun, so far from us remote,
 Produces, with terrestrial humor mix'd, 610
 Here in the dark so many precious things
 Of color glorious, and effect so rare?
 Here matter new to gaze the Devil met
 Undazled; far and wide his eye commands,
 For sight no obstacle found here, nor shade; 615
 But all sun-shine, as when his beams at noon
 Culminate from th' equator, as they now
 Shot upward full direct, whence no way round
 Shadow from body opaque can fall, and th' air 620
 No where so clear, sharpen'd his visual ray
 To objects distant far, whereby he soon
 Saw within ken a glorious Angel stand,
 The same whom John saw also in the sun!
 His back was turn'd, but not his brightness hid;
 Of beaming sunny rays a golden tiar 625
 Circled his head; nor less his locks behind
 Illustrious on his shoulders fledge with wings
 Lay waving round: on some great charge employ'd
 He seem'd; or fix'd in cogitation deep.
 Glad was the spirit impure, as now in hope 630

To

To find who might direct his wand'ring flight,
To Paradise the happy seat of Man,
His journey's end, and our beginning woe.
But first he casts to change his proper shape,
Which else might work him danger or delay: 635
And now a stripling Cherub he appears,
Not of the prime, yet such as in his face
Youth smiled celestial, and to ev'ry limb
Suitable grace diffus'd, so well he feign'd.
Under a coronet his flowing hair 640
In curls on either cheek play'd; wings he wore
Of many a color'd plume, sprinkled with gold.
His habit fit for speed succinct, and held
Before his decent steps a silver wand.
He drew not nigh unheard, the Angel bright, 645
Ere he drew nigh, his radiant visage turn'd,
Admonish'd by his ear, and straight was known
Th' Arch-Angel Uriel; one of the sev'n
Who in Gods presence, nearest to his throne
Stand ready at command, and are his eyes 650
That run thro' all the Heav'ns, or down to th' earth
Bear his swift errands ever moist and dry,
O'er sea and land: him Satan thus accosts.

Uriel, for thou of those sev'n spirits that stand
In sight of God's high throne, gloriously bright, 655
The first art wont his great authentic will
Interpreter through highest Heav'n to bring,
Where all his sons thy embassy attend:
And here art likeliest by supreme decree
Like honor to obtain, and as his eye 660
To visit oft this new creation round:
Unspeakable desire to see, and know
All these his wondrous works, but chiefly Man.
His chief delight and favor, him for whom
All these his works so wondrous he ordain'd, 665
Hath brought me from the quires of Cherubim
Alone thus wand'ring. Brightest Seraph, tell
In which of all these shining orbs hath Man

His fixed seat, or fixed seat hath none,
 But all these shining orbs his choice to dwell: 670
 That I may find him, and with secret gaze,
 Or open admiration him behold,
 On whom the great Creator hath bestow'd
 Worlds, and on whom hath all these graces pour'd;
 That both in him and all things, as is meet, 675
 The Universal Maker we may praise;
 Who justly hath driven out his rebel foes
 To deepest Hell, and to repair that loss
 Created this new happy race of Men
 To serve him better: wise are all his ways. 680

So spake the false dissembler unperceiv'd;
 For neither Man nor Angel can discern
 Hypocrisy, the only evil that walks
 Invisible, except to God alone,
 By his permissive will, through Heav'n and Earth: 685
 And oft, though wisdom wake, suspicion sleeps
 At wisdom's gate, and to simplicity
 Relinquish her charge, while goodness thinks no ill
 Where no ill seems: Which now for once beguil'd
 Uriel, though regent of the sun, and held 690
 The sharpest-sighted spirit of all in Heaven:
 Who to the fraudulent impostor foul
 In his uprightness answer thus return'd.

Fair Angel, thy desire, which tends to know
 The works of God, thereby to glorify 695
 The great Work-master, leads to no excess
 That reaches blame, but rather merits praise
 The more it seems excess, that led thee hither
 From thy empyreal mansion thus alone,
 To witness with thine eyes what some perhaps 700
 Contented with report hear only in Heav'n:
 For wonderful indeed are all his works,
 Pleasant to know, and worthiest to be all
 Had in remembrance always with delight;
 But what created mind can comprehend 705
 Their number, or the wisdom infinite

That

That brought them forth, but hid their causes deep?
 I saw when at his word the formless mass,
 This world's material mould, came to a heap:
 Confusion heard his voice, and wild uproar 710
 Stood rul'd, stood vast infinitude confin'd:
 Till at his second bidding darkness fled,
 Light shone, and order from disorder sprung:
 Swift to their several quarters hasted then
 The cumbrous elements, earth, flood, air, fire: 715
 And this ethereal quintessence of Heav'n
 Flew upward, spirited with various forms,
 That roll'd orbicular, and turn'd to stars,
 Numberless, as thou seest, and how they move;
 Each had his place appointed, each his course; 720
 The rest in circuit walls this universe.
 Look downward on that globe, whose hither side
 With light from hence, tho' but reflected, shines:
 That place is Earth, the seat of man, that light
 His day, which else as th' other hemisphere 725
 Night would invade; but there the neighb'ring moon,
 So call that opposite fair star, her aid
 Timely interposes, and her monthly round
 Still endig, still renewing, through mid Heav'n,
 With borrow'd light her countenance triform 730
 Hence fills and empties, to enlighten th' earth,
 And in her pale dominion checks the night.
 That spot to which I point is Paradise,
 Adam's abode, those lofty shades his bower.
 Thy way thou canst not miss, me mine requires. 735
 Thus said, he turn'd; and Satan bowing low,
 As to superior spirits wont in Heav'n,
 Where honor due and reverence none neglects,
 Took leave, and toward the coast of earth beneath,
 Down from th' ecliptic, sped with hop'd success, 740
 Throws his steep flight in many an aery wheel,
 Nor stay'd, till on Niphates top he lights.

The End of the Third Book.

B O O K IV.

O for that warning voice, which he who saw
 Th' Apocalyps heard cry in Heav'n aloud,
 Then when the Dragon, put to second rout,
 Came furious down to be reveng'd on men,
Woe to th' inhabitants on earth! that now 5
 While time was, our first parents had been warn'd
 The coming of their secret foe, and scap'd,
 Haply so scap'd his mortal snare: for now
 Satan, now first inflam'd with rage, came down,
 The tempter e're th' accuser of mankind, 10
 To wreck on innocent frail man his loss
 Of that first battel, and his flight to Hell:
 Yet not rejoicing in his speed though bold,
 Far off and fearless, nor with cause to boast,
 Begins his dire attempt, which nigh the birth 15
 Now rolling boils in his tumultuous breast,
 And like a devilish engine back recoils
 Upon himself: horror and doubt distract
 His troubled thoughts, and from the bottom stir 20
 The Hell within him; for within him hell
 He brings, and round about him, nor from hell
 One step no more than from himself can fly
 By change of place: now conscience wakes despair 25
 That slumber'd, wakes the bitter memory
 Of what he was, what is, and what must be
 Worfe; of worfe deeds worfe sufferings must ensue.
 Sometimes tow'rs Eden, which now in his view
 Lay pleasant, his griev'd look he fixes sad;
 Sometimes tow'rs Heav'n and the full blazing sun,
 Which now sat high in his meridian tow'r: 30
 Then much revolving, thus in sighs began.
 O thou that with surpassing glory crown'd,
 Look'st from thy sole dominion like the God
 Of this new world, at whose sight all the stars
 Hide their diminished heads; to thee I call, 35

But with no friendly voice, and add thy name
 O-Sun! to tell thee how I hate thy beams,
 That bring to my remembrance from what state
 I fell, how glorious once above thy sphere;
 Till pride and worse ambition threw me down 40
 Warring in Heav'n against Heav'n's matchless king.
 Ah wherefore! he deserv'd no such return
 From me, whom he created what I was
 In that bright eminence, and with his good
 Upbraided none; nor was his service hard. 45
 What could be less than to afford him praise,
 The easiest recompense, and pay him thanks;
 How due! yet all his good prov'd ill in me,
 And wrought but malice; lifted up so high
 I 'sdein'd subjection, and thought one step higher, 50
 Would set me highest, and in a moment quit
 The debt immense of endless gratitude,
 So burdensome still paying, still to owe,
 Forgetful what from him I still receiv'd,
 And understood not that a grateful mind 55
 By owing owes not, but still pays, at once
 Indebted and discharg'd: what burden then?
 O had his pow'rful destiny ordain'd
 Me some inferior Angel! I had stood
 Then happy; no unbounded hope had rais'd
 Ambition. Yet why not? some other Power 60
 As great might have aspir'd, and me though mean
 Drawn to his part; but other Pow'rs as great
 Fell not, but stand unshaken, from within
 Or from without, to all temptations arm'd. 65
 Hadst thou the same free will and pow'r to stand?
 Thou hadst: whom hast thou then, or what, t'accuse,
 But Heav'n's free love dealt equally to all?
 Be then his love accurs'd, since love or hate,
 To me alike, it deals eternal woe. 70
 Nay curs'd be thou; since against his thy will
 Chose freely what it now so justly rues.
 Me miserable! which way shall I fly

Infinite wrath, and infinite despair?
 Which way I fly is Hell; myself am Hell; 75
 And in the lowest deep a lower deep
 Still threat'ning to devour me opens wide,
 To which the Hell I suffer seems a Heaven.
 O then at last relent! is there no place
 Left for repentance, none for pardon left? 80
 None left but by submission; and that word
Disdain forbids me, and my dread of shame
 Among the Spirits beneath, whom I seduc'd
 With other promises and other vaunts
 Than to submit, boasting I could subdue 85
 Th' Omnipotent. Ay me! they little know
 How dearly I abide that boast so vain;
 Under what torments inwardly I groan,
 While they adore me on the throne of Hell.
 With diadem and sceptre high advanc'd, 90
 The lower still I fall, only supreme
 In misery; such joy ambition finds!
 But say I could repent, and could obtain
 By act of grace my former state; how soon
 Would high recall high thoughts, how soon unseiy 95
 What feign'd submission swore! ease would recant
 Vows made in pain, as violent and void.
 For never can true reconciliation grow
 Where wounds of deadly hate have pierc'd so deep:
 Which would but lead me to a worse relapse 100
 And heavier fall: so should I purchase dear
 Short intermission bought with double smart.
 This knows my punisher; therefore as far
 From granting he, as I from begging peace.
 All hope excluded thus, behold in stead 105
 Of us out-cast, exil'd, his new delight,
 Mankind created; and for him this world.
 So farewell hope, and with hope farewell fear,
 Farewel remorse! all good to me is lost;
 Evil be thou my good! by thee at least 110
 Divided empire with Heav'n's king I hold;

By

By thee, and more than half perhaps will reign:
As Man e're-long, and this new world shall know.

Thus while he spake, each passion dimm'd his face
Thrice chang'd with pale, ire, envy and despair; 115
Which marr'd his borrow'd visage, and betray'd
Him counterfeit, if any eye beheld.

For heav'nly minds from such distempers foul
Are ever clear. Whereof he soon aware,

Each perturbation smooch'd with outhward calm, 120
Artificer of fraud; and was the first

That practis'd falsehood under saintly show,
Deep malice to conceal, couch'd with revenge:

Yet not enough had practis'd to deceive
Uriel once warn'd; whose eye persued him down 125

The way he went, and on th' Assyrian mount
Saw him disfigur'd, more than could befall

Spirit of happy fort: his gestures fierce
He mark'd, and mad demeanour, then alone,

As he suppos'd, all unobserv'd, unseen. 130
So on he fares, and to the border comes

Of Eden, where delicious Paradise,
Now nearer, crowns with her enclosure green,

As with a rural mound, the champaign head
Of a steep wilderness, whose hairy sides 135

With thicket overgrown, grotesque and wild,
Access deny'd: and over head up grew

Insuperable hight of loftiest shade,
Cedar, and pine, and fir, and branching palm,

A sylvan scene, and as the ranks ascend 140
Shade above shade, a woody theatre

Of stateliest view. Yet higher than their tops
The verdurous wall of Paradise up-sprung:

Which to our general first gave prospect large
Into his neather empire, neighb'ring round. 145

And higher than that wall a circling row
Of goodliest trees, loaden with fairest fruit,

Blossoms and fruits at once of golden hue,
Appear'd, with gay enamel'd colors mix'd:

By

On

On which the Sun more glad impress'd his beams 150
 Than in fair evening cloud, or humid bow,
 When God hath show'r'd the earth; so lovely seem'd
 That landscape! and of pure now purer air
 Meets his approach, and to the heart inspires
 Vernal delight and joy, able to drive 155
 All sadness but despair: now gentle gales,
 Fanning their odoriferous wings dispense
 Native perfumes; and whisper whence they stole
 Those balmy spoils. As when to them who sail
 Beyond the Cape of Hope, and now are past 160
 Mozambic, off at sea north-east winds blow
 Sabeen odors from the spicy shore
 Of Araby the blest; with such delay
 Well pleas'd they slack their course, and many a league
 Chear'd with the grateful smell old Ocean smiles: 165
 So entertain'd those odorous sweets the Fiend
 Who came their bane; though with them better pleas'd
 Than Asmodæus with the fishy fume
 That drove him, though enamour'd, from the sponse
 Of Tobit's son, and with a vengeance sent 170
 From Media post to Egypt, there fast bound.
 Now to th' ascent of that steep savage hill
 Satan had journey'd on, pensive and slow;
 But further way found none, so thick entwin'd,
 As one continu'd brake, the undergrowth 175
 Of shrubs and tangling bushes had perplex'd
 All path of man or beast that bas'd that way:
 One gate there only was, and that look'd east
 On th' other side: which when th' Arch-felon saw,
 Due entrance he disdain'd, and in contempt, 180
 At one slight bound high over-leap'd all bound
 Of hill or highest wall, and sheer within
 Lights on his feet. As when a prowling wolf,
 Whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey,
 Watching where shepherds pen their flocks at eve 185
 In hurdled cotes amid the field secure,
 Leaps o'er the fence with ease into the fold:

Or

Or as a thief bent to unhoard the cash
 Of some rich burgher, whose substantial doors,
 Cross-barr'd and bolted fast, fear no assault,
 In at the window climbs, or o'er the tiles:
 So clomb this first grand thief into God's fold;
 So since into his Church lewd hirelings climb.
 Thence up he flew, and on the tree of life,
 The middle tree and highest there that grew,
 Sat like a cormorant; yet not true life,
 Thereby regain'd, but sat devising death
 To them who liv'd: nor on the virtue thought
 Of that life-giving plant, but only us'd
 For prospect, what well us'd had been the pledge
 Of immortality. So little knows
 Any, but God alone, to value right
 The good before him, but perverts best things
 To worst abuse, or to their meanest use.
 Beneath him with new wonder now he views
 To all delight of human sense expos'd
 In narrow room Natures whole wealth, yea more,
 A Heav'n on Earth! for blissful Paradise
 Of God the garden was, by him in the east
 Of Eden plant'd; Eden stretch'd her line
 From Auram eastward to the royal towers
 Of great Seleucia, built by Grecian kings,
 Or where the sons of Eden long before
 Dwelt in T'elassar. In this pleasant soil
 His far more pleasant garden God ordain'd:
 Out of the fertile ground he caus'd to grow
 All trees of nobler kind for sight, smell, taste;
 And all amid them stood the tree of life,
 High eminent, blooming ambrosial fruit,
 Of vegetable gold: and next to life,
 Our death the Tree of knowledge, grew fast by:
 Knowledge of good bought dear by knowing ill!
 Southward through Eden went a river large,
 Nor chang'd his course, but through the thaggy hill
 Pass'd underneath ingulf'd, for God had thrown
 That

That mountain as his garden mold high rais'd
 Upon the rapid current, which through veins
 Of porous earth with kindly thirst up drawn,
 Rose a fresh fountain, and with many a rill
 Water'd the garden; thence united fell 236
 Down the steep glade, and met the nether flood
 Which from his darksome passage now appears,
 And now divided into four main streams,
 Runs diverse, wand'ring many a famous realm
 And country, whereof here needs no account; 238
 But rather to tell how, if Art could tell,
 How, from that sapphire fount the crisped brooks,
 Rolling on orient pearl and sands of gold,
 With mazy error under pendent shades
 Ran nectar, visiting each plant, and fed 240
 Flow'rs worthy of Paradise, which not nice art
 In beds and curious knots, but Nature boon
 Pour'd forth profuse on hill, and dale, and plain,
 Both where the morning sun first warmly smote
 The open field, and where the unpierc'd shade 245
 Imbrown'd the noon-tide bow'rs. Thus was this place
 A happy rural seat of various view:
 Groves whose rich trees wept odorous gums, and balm,
 Others whose fruit burnish'd with golden rind
 Hung amiable; Hesperian fables true, 250
 If true, here only, and of delicious taste.
 Betwixt them lawns, or level downs, and flocks
 Grazing the tender herb, were interpos'd,
 Or palmy hillock, or the flow'ry lap
 Of some irriguous valley spread her store; 255
 Flow'rs of all hue, and without thorn the rose.
 Another side, umbrageous grots and caves
 Of cool recess, o'er which the mantling vine
 Lays forth her purple grape, and gently creeps
 Luxuriant: mean-while murm'ring waters fall 260
 Down the slope hills, dispers'd, or in a lake,
 That to the fringed bank with myrtle crown'd
 Her chrystal mirror holds, unite their streams.

The

The birds their quire apply; airs, vernal airs,
 Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune **265**
 The trembling leaves, while universal Pan,
 Knit with the Graces and the Hours in dance,
 Led on th' eternal spring. Not that fair field
 Of Enna, where Proserpine gathering flowers,
 Herself a fairer flow'r by gloomy Dis **270**
 Was gather'd, which cost Ceres all that pain
 To seek her thro' the world; nor that sweet grove
 Of Daphne by Orontes, and th' inspir'd
 Castalian spring, might with this Paradise
 Of Eden strive: nor that Nyseian isle **275**
 Girt with the river Triton, where old Cham,
 Whom Gentiles Ammon call and Libyan Jove,
 Hid Amalthea, and her florid son
 Young Bacchus, from his stepdame Rhea's eye:
 Nor where Abassin kings their issue guard, **280**
 Mount Amara, though this by some suppos'd
 True Paradise, under the Ethiop line
 By Nilus' head, inclos'd with shining rock;
 A whole day's journey high, but wide remote
 From this Assyrian garden; where the Fiend **285**
 Saw undelighted all delight, all kind
 Of living creatures new to sight and strange.

Two of far nobler shape erect and tall,
 Godlike erect; with native honor clad
 In naked majesty; seem'd Lords of all, **290**
 And worthy seem'd: for in their looks divine,
 The image of their glorious maker shone,
 Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe and pure,
 Severe, but in true filial freedom plac'd,
 Whence true authority in men: though both **295**
 Not equal, as their sex not equal seem'd;
 For contemplation he and valor form'd,
 For softness she and sweet attractive grace;
 He for God only, she for God in him,
 His fair large front and eye sublime declar'd **300**
 Absolute rule; and hyacinthin locks

Round

Round from his parted forelock manly hung
 Clustring; but not beneath his shoulders broad.
 She, as a veil, down to the slender waist
 Her unadorned golden tresses wore, 305
 Dishevel'd, but in wanton ringlets wav'd,
 As the vine curls her tendrils, which imply'd
 Subjection, but requir'd with gentle sway,
 And by her yielded, by him best receiv'd,
 Yielded with coy submission, modest pride, 310
 And sweet reluctant amorous delay.
 Nor those mysterious parts were then conceal'd;
 Then was not guilty shame, dishonest shame
 Of nature's works; honor dishonorable,
 Sin-bred! how have ye troubled all mankind 315
 With shows instead, mere shows of seeming pure,
 And banish'd from man's life his happiest life,
 Simplicity and spotless innocence?
 So pass'd they naked on, nor shunn'd the sight
 Of God or Angel, for they thought no ill: 320
 So hand in hand they pass'd, the loveliest pair
 That ever since in love's embraces met;
 Adam the goodliest man of men since born
 His sons the fairest of her daughters Eve.
 Under a rust of shade, that on a green 325
 Stood whisp'ring soft, by a fresh fountain side
 They sat them down: and after no more toil
 Of their sweet gard'ning labor than suffic'd
 To recommend cool Zephyr, and made ease
 More easy, wholesome thirst and appetite 330
 More grateful, to their supper fruits they fell,
 Nectarine fruits, which the compliant boughs
 Yielded them, side-long as they sat recline
 On the soft downy bank damask'd with flowers.
 The savoury pulp they chew, and in the rind 335
 Still as they thirsted scoop the brimming stream;
 Nor gentle purpose, nor endearing smiles
 Wanted, nor youthful dalliance as befits
 Fair couple, link'd in happy nuptial league,

Alone

Alone as they. About them frisking play'd 340
 All beasts of th'earth, since wild, and of all chase
 In wood or wilderness, forest or den;
 Sporting the lion ramp'd, and in his paw
 Dandled the kid; bears, tigers, ounces, pards,
 Gambol'd before them, th'unwieldy elephant 345
 To make them mirth us'd all his might, and wreath'd
 His lithe proboscis; close the serpent fly
 Insinuating, wove with gordian twine
 His braided train, and of his fatal guile
 Gave proof unheeded: others on the grass 350
 Couch'd, and now fill'd with pasture gazing fat,
 Or bedward ruminating: for the sun
 Declin'd was hastening now with prone career
 To th'ocean isles, and in th'ascending scale
 Of Heav'n the stars that usher evening rose: 355
 When Satan still in gaze, as first he stood,
 Scarce thus at length fail'd speech recover'd sad.

O Hell! what do mine eyes with grief behold!
 Into our room of bliss thus high advanc'd
 Creatures of other mold; earth-born perhaps, 360
 Not spirits, yet to heav'nly spirits bright
 Little inferior; whom my thoughts pursue
 With wonder, and could love, so lively shines
 In them divine resemblance, and such grace 364
 The hand that form'd them on their shape hath pour'd.
 Ah gentle pair, ye little thinck how nigh
 Your change approaches, when all these delights
 Will vanish, and deliver you to woe,
 More woe, the more your taste is now of joy:
 Happy, but for so happy ill secur'd 370
 Long to continue; and this high seat your Heav'n
 Ill fenc'd for Heav'n, to keep out such a foe
 As now is enter'd: yet no purpos'd foe
 To you, whom I could pity thus forlorn,
 Though I unpitied. League with you I seek, 375
 And mutual amity so strait, so close,
 That I with you must dwell, or you with me

Henceforth: my dwelling haply may not please,
 Like this fair Paradise, your sense, yet such
 Accept your maker's work; he gave it me; 380
 Which I as freely give: Hell shall unfold,
 To entertain you two, her widest gates,
 And send forth all her kings: there will be room,
 Not like these narrow limits, to receive
 Your numerous offspring: if no better place, 385
 Thank him who puts me loath to this revenge
 On you who wrong me not for him who wrong'd.
 And should I at your harmless innocence
 Melt, as I do, yet public reason just,
 Honor and empire with revenge enlarg'd, 390
 By conqu'ring this new world, compels me now
 To do, what else, though damn'd, I should abhor.

So spake the Fiend, and with necessity,
 The tyrant's plea, excus'd his devilish deeds.
 Then from his lofty stand on that high tree 395
 Down he alights among the sportful herd
 Of those four-footed kinds, himself now one,
 Now other, as their shape serv'd best his end
 Nearer to view his prey, and uncip'd
 To mark what of their state he more might learn 400
 By word or action mark'd: about them round
 A lion now he stalks with fiery glare;
 Then as a tiger, who by chance hath spy'd
 In some purlieu two gentle fawns at play,
 Straight couches close, then rising changes oft 405
 His couchant watch, as one who chose his ground,
 Whence rushing he might surest seize them both
 Grip'd in each paw: when Adam first of men
 To first of women Eve thus moving speech,
 Turn'd him, all ear, to hear new utterance flow. 410

Sole partner and sole part of all these joys,
 Dearer thyself than all! needs must the Pow'r
 That made us, and for us this ample world,
 Be infinitely good, and of his good
 As liberal and free as infinite; 415

That

That rais'd us from the dust, and plac'd us here
 In all this happiness, who at his hand
 Have nothing merited, nor can perform
 Ought whereof he hath need, he who requires
 From us no other service than to keep
 This one, this easy charge, of all the trees
 In Paradise that bear delicious fruit
 So various, not to taste that only tree
 Of knowledge, planted by the tree of life;
 So near grows death to life, whate'er death is,
 Some dreadful thing no doubt: for well thou know'st
 God hath pronounc'd it death to taste that tree,
 The only sign of our obedience left
 Among so many sings of pow'r and rule
 Confer'd upon us, and dominion giv'n
 Over all other creatures that possess
 Earth, air, and sea. Then let us not think hard
 One easy prohibition, who enjoy
 Free leave so large to all things else, and choice
 Unlimited of manifold delights:
 But let us ever praise him, and extoll
 His bounty, following our delightful task
 To prune these growing plants, and tend these flow'rs,
 Which were it toilsome, yet with thee were sweet.

To whom thus Eve reply'd. O thou for whom
 And from whom I was form'd, flesh of thy flesh,
 And without whom am to no end, my guide
 And head, what thou hast said is just and right.
 For we to him indeed all praises owe,
 And daily thanks; I chiefly, who enjoy
 So far the happier lot, enjoying thee
 Pre eminent by so much odds, while thou
 Like consort to thyself canst no where find.
 That day I oft remember, when from sleep
 I first awak'd, and found myself repos'd
 Under a shade of flow'rs, much wond'ring where
 And what I was, whence thither brought and how.
 Not distant far from thence a murmuring sound

Of waters issu'd from a cave, and spread
 Into a liquid plain, then stood unmov'd 455
 Pure as th' expanse of Heav'n; I thither went
 With unexperienc'd thought, and laid me down
 On the green bank, to look into the clear
 Smooth lake, that to me seem'd another sky.
 As I bent down to look, just opposite 460
 A shape within the watry gleam appear'd,
 Bending to look on me. I started back,
 It started back; but pleas'd I soon return'd;
 Pleas'd it return'd as soon with answering looks
 Of sympathy and love: there I had fix'd 465
 Mine eyes till now, and pin'd with vain desire,
 Had not a voice thus warn'd me, "What thou seest,
 "What there thou seest, fair Creature, is thyself;
 "Whit thee it came and goes: but follow me,
 "And I will bring thee where no shadow stays 470
 "Thy coming, and thy soft embraces, he
 "Whose image thou art; him thou shalt enjoy
 "Inseparably thine, to him shalt bear
 "Multitudes like thyself, and thence be call'd
 "Mother of human race." What could I do, 475
 But follow straight, invisibly thus led?
 Till I espy'd thee, fair indeed and tall,
 Under a plantan, yet methought less fair,
 Less winning soft, less amiably mild,
 Than that smooth watry image: back I turn'd; 480
 Thou following cry'dst aloud, Return fair Eve,
 Whom fly'st thou? whom thou fly'st, of him thou art,
 His flesh, his bone; to give thee being I lent
 Out of my side to thee, nearest my heart
 Substantial life, to have thee by my side 485
 Henceforth an individual solace dear.
 Part of my soul, I seek thee, and thee claim
 My other half! — with that thy gentle hand
 Seis'd mine, I yielded, and from that time see
 How beauty is excell'd by manly grace 490
 And wisdom, which alone is truly fair.

So spake our general mother, and with eyes
 Of conjugal attraction unprov'd,
 And meek surrender, half embracing lean'd
 On our first father; half her swelling breast
 Naked met his under the flowing gold
 Of her loose tresses hid: he in delight
 Both of her beauty and submissive charms
 Smil'd with superior love, as Jupiter
 On Juno smiles, when he impregns the clouds
 That shed May flow'rs; and press'd her matron lip
 With kisses pure: aside the Devil turn'd
 For envy, yet with jealous leer malign
 Ey'd them askance, and to himself thus plain'd.

Sight hateful, sight tormenting! thus these two
 Imparadis'd in one another's arms,
 The happier Eden, shall enjoy their fill
 Of bliss on bliss, while I to Hell am thrust,
 Where neither joy nor love, but fierce desire,
 Among our other torments not the least,
 Still unfulfill'd with pain of longing pines.
 Yet let me not forget what I have gain'd
 From their own mouths; all is not theirs it seems:
 One fatal Tree there stands of knowledge call'd,
 Forbidden them to taste: knowledge forbidden?
 Suspicious, reasonless. Why should their Lord
 Envy them that? can it be sin to know?
 Can it be death? and do they only stand
 By ignorance? is that their happy state,
 The proof of their obedience and their faith?
 O fair foundation laid whereon to build
 Their ruin! hence I will excite their minds
 With more desire to know, and to reject
 Envious commands, invented with design
 To keep them low whom knowledge might exalt
 Equal with Gods: aspiring to be such,
 They taste and die: what likelier can ensue?
 But first with narrow search I must walk round
 This garden, and no corner leave unspy'd;

A chance but chance may lead where I may meet 530
 Some wandring Spirit of Heav'n, by fountain side,
 Or in thick shade retir'd, from him to draw
 What further would be learn'd. Live while ye may
 Yet happy pair; enjoy, till I return,
 Short pleasures, for long woes are to succeed, 535

So saying, his proud step he scornful turn'd,
 But with fly circumspection, and began
 Through wood, through waste, o'er hill, o'er dale his roam
 Mean-while in utmost longitude, where Heav'n
 With earth and ocean meets, the setting sun 540
 Slowly descended, and with right aspect
 Against the eastern gate of Paradise
 Levell'd his evening rays: it was a rock
 Of alabaster, pil'd up to the clouds,
 Conspicuous far, winding with one ascent 545
 Accessible from earth, one entrance high;
 The rest was craggy cliff, that overhung
 Still as it rose, impossible to climb.
 Betwixt these roky pillars Gabriel sat,
 Chief of th' Angelic guards, awaiting night: 550
 About him exercis'd heroic games

Th' unarmed youth of Heav'n, but nigh at hand
 Celestial armory, shields, helms, and spears,
 Hung high with diamond flaming, and with gold.
 Thither came Uriel, gliding through the ev'n 555
 On a Sun beam, swift as a shooting star
 In Autumn thwarts the night, when vapors fir'd
 Impress the air, and shows the mariner
 From what point of his Compass to beware
 Impetuous winds: he thus began in haste. 565

Gabriel, to thee thy course by lot hath giv'n
 Charge and strict watch, that to this happy place
 No evil thing approach, or enter in.
 This day at height of noon came to my sphere
 A spirit, zealous, as he seem'd, to know 560
 More of th' Almighty's works, and chiefly man,
 God's latest image: I describ'd his way

Bent

Bent all on speed, and mark'd his aery gait:
 But in the mount that lies from Eden north,
 Where he first lighted, soon discern'd his looks 570
 Alien from Heav'n, with passions foul obscur'd:
 Mine eye persued him still; but under shade
 Lost sight of him; one of the banish'd crew,
 I fear, hath ventur'd from the deep to raise
 New troubles; him thy care must be to find. 575

To whom the winged warrior thus return'd:
 Uriel, no wonder if thy perfect sight,
 Amid the Sun's bright circle where thou sit'st,
 See far and wide: in at this gate none pass
 The vigilance here plac'd, but such as come 580
 Well known from Heav'n; and since meridian hour
 No creature thence. If spirit of other sort,
 So minded, have o'erleap'd these earthy bounds
 On purpose, hard thou know'st it to exclude
 Spiritual substance with corporeal bar. 585
 But if within the circuit of these walks,
 In whatsoever shape he lurk, of whom
 Thou tell'st, by morrow dawning I shall know.

So promis'd he, and Uriel to his charge
 Return'd on that bright beam, whose point now rais'd 590
 Bore him slope downward to the Sun, now fall'n
 Beneath th' Azores; whether the prime orb,
 Incredible how swift, had thither roll'd
 Diurnal, or this less volubil earth
 By shorter flight to th'east, had left him there 595
 Arraying with reflected purple and gold.
 The clouds that on his western throne attend.
 Now came still evening on, and twilight gray
 Had in her sober livery all things clad;
 Silence accompany'd, for beast and bird, 600
 They to their grassy couch, these to their nests
 Were slunk; all but the wakeful nightingale:
 She all night long her amorous decant sung;
 Silence was pleas'd: now glow'd the firmament
 With living saphirs: Hesperus, that led 605

The

The starry host rode brightest, till the moon
Rising in clouded majesty at length,
Apparent Queen, unveil'd her peerless light,
And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw;

When Adam thus to Eve. Fair consort, th'hour 610
Of night, and all things now retir'd to rest
Mind us of like repose, since God hath set
Labor and rest, as day and night to men
Successive; and the timely dew of sleep
Now falling with soft slumbrous weight, inclines 615
Our eye-lids: other creatures all day long
Rove idle, unemploy'd, and less need rest:
Man hath his daily work of body, or mind
Appointed, which declares his dignity,
And the regard of Heav'n on all his ways: 620
While other animals unactive range,
And of their doings God takes no account.

To-morrow, e're fresh morning streak the east
With first approach of light, we must be ris'n,
And at our pleasant labor, to reform 625
Yon flow'ry arbors, yonder alleys green
Our walk at noon, with branches overgrown;
That mock our scant manuring, and require
More hands than ours to lop their wanto growth.
Those blossoms also, and those dropping gums 630
That lie bestrown unsightly and unsmooth,
Ask riddance, if we mean to tread with ease:
Mean while, as nature wills, night bids us rest.

To whom thus Eve with perfect beauty adorn'd:
My author and disposer, what thou bidst 635
Unargu'd I obey; so God ordains;
God is thy law, thou mine: to know no more
Is woman's happiest knowledge and her praise.
With thee conversing I forget all time;
All seasons and their change, all please alike. 640
Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet,
With charm of earliest birds: pleasant the Sun,
When first on this delightful land he spreads

His

His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flow'r,
 Glist'ring with dew: fragrant the fertile earth. 645
 After soft show'rs; and sweet the coming on
 Of grateful ev'ning mild: then silent night
 With this her solemn bird, and this fair moon,
 And these the gems of heav'n, her starry train.
 But neither breath of morn, when she ascends. 650
 With charm of earliest birds; nor rising Sun
 On this delightful land; nor herb, fruit, flow'r,
 Glist'ring with dew; nor fragrance after showers;
 Nor grateful evening mild; nor silent night
 With this her solemn bird, nor walk by moon, 655
 Or glittering star-light, without thee is sweet.
 But wherefore all night long shine these, for whom
 This glorious light, when sleep hath shut all eyes?
 To whom our general ancestor reply'd;
 Daughter of God and man, accomplish'd Eve, 660
 These have their course to finish, round the earth,
 By morrow ev'ning, and from land to land;
 In order, though to nations yet unborn,
 Minist'ring light prepar'd, they set and rise;
 Lest total darkness should by night regain 665
 Her old possession, and extinguish life
 In nature and all things; which these soft fires
 Not only enlighten, but with kindly heat
 Of various influence foment and warm,
 Temper or nourish; or in part shed down 670
 Their stellar virtue on all kinds that grow
 On earth; made hereby apter to receive
 Perfection from the Sun's more potent ray.
 These then, though unbelied in deep of night, 674
 Shine not in vain; nor think, though men were none,
 That heav'n would want spectators, God want praise:
 Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth
 Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep.
 All these with ceaseless praise his works behold
 Both day and night: how often from the steep 680
 Of echoing hill, or thicket, have we heard

Celestial voices to the midnight air,
Sole, or responsive each to other's note,
Singing their great Creator; oft in bands
While they keep watch, or nightly rounding walk 685
With heav'nly touch of instrumental sounds,
In full harmonic number join'd, their songs
Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to Heaven.

Thus talking, hand in hand, alone they pass'd
On to their blissful Bow'r: it was a place 690
Chos'n by the sov'reign planter, when he fram'd
All things to man's delightful use: the roof
Of thickest covert was inwoven shade
Laurel and myrtle; and what higher grew
Of firm and fragrant leaf, on either side 695
Acanthus; and each odorous bushy shrub
Fenc'd up the verdant wall: each beauteous flow'r,
Iris all hues, roses, and jessamine,
Rear'd high their flourish'd heads between, and wrought
Mosaic; underfoot the violet, 700
Crocus and hyacinth, with rich inlay
Broider'd the ground, more color'd than with stone
Of costliest emblem: other creature here,
Beast, bird, insect, or worm, durst enter none;
Such was their awe of man. In shadier bow'r 705
More sacred and sequester'd, though but feign'd,
Pan or Sylvanus never slept, nor Nymph,
Nor faunus haunted. Here in close recess
With flowers, garlands, and sweet-smelling herbs,
Espoused Eve deck'd first her nuptial bed, 710
And heav'nly quires the hymenaean sung;
What day the genial Angel to our fire
Brought her in naked beauty, more adorn'd,
More lovely than Pandora, whom the Gods
Endow'd with all their gifts, and O, too like 715
In sad event! when to th' unwiser son
Of Japhet brought by Hermes, she insnar'd
Mankind with her fair looks, to be aveng'd
On him who had stole Jove's authentic fire.

Thus

Thus at their shady Lodge arriv'd, both stood, 720
Both turn'd, and under open sky ador'd
The God that made both sky, air, earth and heav'n,
Which they beheld, the moon's resplendent globe,
And starry pole: Thou also mad'st the night,
Maker omnipotent, and thou the day 725
Which we in our appointed work employ'd
Have finish'd, happy in our mutual help
And mutual love, the crown of all our bliss
Ordain'd by thee, and this delicious place
For us too large, where thy abundance wants 730
Partakers, and uncropt falls to the ground.
But thou hast promis'd from us two a race
To fill the earth, who shall with us extol
Thy goodness infinite, both when we wake,
And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep 735

This said unanimous, and other rites
Observing none, but adoration pure,
Which God likes best, into their inmost bow'r
Handed they went; and eas'd the putting off
These troublesome disguises which we wear, 740
Straight side by side were laid: nor turn'd Iween
Adam from his fair spouse, nor Eve the rites
Mysterious of connubial love refus'd:
Whatever hypocrites austere talk
Of purity and place and innocence, 745
Defaming as impure what God declares
Pure, and commands to some, leaves free to all.
Our maker bids increase; who bids abstain
But our destroyer, foe to God and man?
Hail wedded love! mysterious law, true source 750
Of human offspring, sole propriety
In Paradise, of all things common else.
By thee adulterous lust was driv'n from men,
Among the bestial herds to range; by thee,
Founded in reason, loyal, just, and pure, 755
Relations dear, and all the charities
Of father, son, and brother first were known.

Fat

Thus

Far be it, that I should write thee sin or blame;
 Or think thee unfitting holiest place,
 Perpetual fountain of domestic sweets! 760
 Whose bed is undelf'd and chaste pronounc'd,
 Present, or past, as Saints and Patriarchs us'd.
 Here Love his golden shafts employs, here lights
 His constant lamp, and waves his purple wines,
 Reigns here and revels: not in the boughy smile 765
 Of harlots, loveless, joyless, unendeard,
 Casual fruition, nor in court amours,
 Mix'd dance, or wanton mask, or midnight ball,
 Or serenate, which the star'd lover sings
 To his proud fair, best quitted with disdain. 770
 These, lull'd by nightingales, embracing slept,
 And on their naked limbs the flow'ry roof
 Shower'd roses, which the morn repair'd. Sleep on
 Blest pair; and O! yet happiest, if ye seek
 No happier state, and know to know no more. 775

Now had night measur'd with her shadowy cone
 Half way up hill this vast sublunar vault,
 And from their ivory port the Cherubim
 Forth issuing at th' accustom'd hour stood arm'd
 To their night watches in warlike parade, 780
 When Gabriel to his next in pow'r thus spake.

Uzziel, half these draw off, and coast the south
 With strictest watch: these other wheel the north,
 Our circuit meets full west. As flame they part
 Half wheeling to the shield, half to the spear. 785
 From these, two strong and subtle spirits he call'd,
 That near him stood, and gave them thus in charge.
 Michael and Zephon, with wing'd speed
 Search through this garden, leave unsearch'd no nook:
 But chiefly where those two fair creatures lodge, 790
 Now laid perhaps asleep secure of harm.
 This evening from the Sun's decline arriv'd,
 Who tells of some infernal spirit seen
 Hitherward bent, who could have thought? escap'd
 The bars of Hell, on errand bad no doubt: 795

Such

Such where ye find, seize fast, and hither bring.

So saying, on he led his radiant files,
Dazling the moon; these to the bow'r direct,
In search of whom they sought: him there they found
Squat like a toad, close at the ear of Eve; 800

Assaying by his devilish art to reach
The organs of her fancy, and with them forge
Illusions as he list, phantasms and dreams:

Or if, inspiring venom, he might taint
Th' animal spirits, that from pure blood arise 805
Like gentle breaths from rivers pure; thence raise

At least distemper'd, discontented thoughts,
Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires,
Blown up with high conceits ingendring pride.

Him thus intent Ithuriel with his spear 810
Touch'd lightly; for no falsehood can endure

Touch of celestial temper; but returns
Of force to its own likeness, up he starts

Discover'd and surpris'd. As when a spark
Lights on a heap of nitrous powder, laid 815

Fit for the gun, some magazine to store
Against a rumor'd war, the smutty grain
With sudden blaze diffus'd, inflames the air:

So started up in his own shape the Fiend,
Back stept those two fair angels half amaz'd 820

So sudden to behold the grisly King;
Yet thus, unmov'd with fear, accost him soon.

Which of those rebel spirits adjudg'd to Hell
Com'st thou, escap'd thy prison? and transform'd,
Why far'st thou, like an enemy in wair, 825
Here watching at the head of these that sleep?

Known ye not then, said Satan, fill'd with scorn,
Know ye not Me? ye knew me once no mate
For you, there sitting where you durst not soar;

Not to know me argues yourselves unknown, 830
Th' lowest of your throng: or if ye know,

Why ask ye, and superfluous begin
Your message, like to end as much in vain?

To whom thus Zephon, answering scorn with scorn,
 Think not, revolted spirit, thy shape the same 835
 Or undiminish'd brightness to be known,
 As when thou stood'st in Heav'n upright and pure;
 That glory then, when thou no more wast good,
 Departed from thee; and thou resembl'st now
 Thy sin and place of doom, obscure and foul. 840
 But come, for thou, be sure, shalt give account
 To him who sent us, whose charge is to keep
 This place inviolable, and these from harm.

So spake the Cherub, and his grave rebuke,
 Severe in youthful beauty, added grace 845
 Invincible: abash'd the Devil stood,
 And felt how awful goodness is, and saw
 Virtue in her shape how lovely, saw and pin'd,
 His loss: but chiefly to find here observ'd
 His lustre visibly impair'd; yet seem'd 850
 Undaunted. If I must contend, said he,
 Best with the best, the sender not the sent,
 Or all at once; more glory will be won,
 Or less be lost. Fhy fear, said Zephon bold,
 Will save us trial what the least can do 855
 Single against thee wicked, and thence weak.

The Fiend reply'd not, overcome with rage;
 But like a proud steed rein'd, went haughty on,
 Champing his iron curb: to strive or fly
 He held it vain; awe from above had quell'd 860
 His heart, not else dismay'd. Now drew they nigh
 The western point, where those half-rounding guards
 Just met, and closing stood in squadron join'd,
 Awaiting next command; to whom their Chief,
 Gabriel, from the front thus call'd aloud. 865

O friends, I hear the tread of nimble feet
 Hastening this way, and now by glimpse discern
 Ithuriel and Zephon trough the shade,
 And with them comes a third of regal port,
 But faded splendor wan, who by his gait 870
 And fierce demeanor seems the Prince of Hell;

Not

Not likely to part hence without contest:
Stand firm, for in his look defiance lours.

He scarce had ended when those two approach'd,
And brief related whom they brought, where found,
How busied, in what form and posture couch'd. 876
To whom with stern regard thus Gabriel spake.

Why hast thou, Satan, broke the bounds prescrib'd
To thy transgressions, and disturb'd the charge
Of others, who approve not to transgress 880
By thy example, but have pow'r and right
To question thy bold entrance on this place;
Employ'd it seems to violate sleep, and those 845
Whose dwelling God hath planted here in plis?

To whom thus Satan with contemptuous brow. 885
Gabriel, thou hadst in Heav'n th' esteem of wise,
And such I held thee; but this question ask'd
Puts me in doubt. Lives there who loves his pain?
Who would not, finding way, break loose from Hell,
Tho' thither doom'd? thou would'st thyself, no doubt,
And boldly venture to whatever place,
Farthest from pain; where thou might'st hope to change
Torment with ease, and soonest recompense 855

Dole with delight, which in this place I sought:
To thee no reason, who know'st only good, 895
But evil hast not try'd. And wilt object
His will who bound us? let him surer bar
His iron gates, if he intends our stay
In that dark durance! thus much what was ask'd.
The rest is true: they found me where they say; 900
But that implies not violence, or harm.

Thus he in scorn. The warlike Angel mov'd,
Disdainfully half smiling, thus reply'd,
O lots of one in Heav'n to judge of wise,
Since Satan fell, whom folly overthrew! 905
And now returns him from his prison scap'd,
Gravely in doubt whether to hold them wise
Or not, who ask what boldness brought him hither
Unlicens'd from his bounds in Hell prescrib'd;

So wise he judges it to fly from pain 910
 However, and to scape his punishment.
 So judge thou still, presumptuous, till the wrath,
 Which thou incurr'st by flying, meet thy flight
 Sev'nfold, and scourge that wisdom back to Hell,
 Which taught thee yet no better, that no pain 915
 Can equal anger infinite provok'd.
 But wherefore thou alone? wherefore with thee
 Came not all Hell broke loose? is pain to them
 Less pain, less to be fled? or thou than they
 Less hardy to indure? courageous chief! 920
 The first in flight from pain! hadst thou alledg'd
 To thy deserted host this cause of flight,
 Thou surely hadst not come sole fugitive.

To which the Fiend thus answer'd frowning stern.
 Not that I less indure, or shrink from pain, 925
 Insulting Angel, well thou know'st; I stood
 The fiercest, when in battel to thy aid
 The blasting vollied thunder made all speed,
 And seconded thy else not dreaded spear.
 But still thy words at random, as before, 930
 Argue thy inexperience what behoves
 From hard assays and ill successes past,
 A faithful leader, not to hazard all
 Through ways of danger by himself untry'd:
 I therefore, I alone first undertook 935
 To wing the desolate Abyss, and spy
 This new created world, whereof in Hell
 Fame is not silent; here in hope to find
 Better abode, and my afflicted Pow'rs
 To settle here on earth, or in mid air; 940
 Though, for possession, put to try once more
 What thou and thy gay legions dare against;
 Whose easier business were to serve their Lord
 High up in Heav'n, with songs to hymn his throne,
 And practis'd distances to cringe, not fight. 945

To whom the warrior Angel soon reply'd:
 To say, and straight unsay, pretending first

Wife

910
915
920
925
930
935
940
945
Wife

Wife to fly pain, professing next the spy,
 Argues no leader but a liar trac'd,
 Satan! and couldst thou *faithful* add? O name, 950
 O sacred name of faithfulness profan'd!
 Faithful to whom? to thy rebellious crew?
 Army of fiends, fit body to fit head.
 Was this your discipline and faith engag'd,
 Your military obedience, to dissolve 955
 Allegiance to th' acknowledg'd Pow'r supreme?
 And thou, fly hypocrite! who now wouldst seem
 Patron of liberty, who more than thou
 Once fawn'd, and cring'd, and servily ador'd
 Heav'n's awful Monarch? wherefore but in hope 960
 To dispossess him, and thyself to reign?
 But mark what I arreed thee now: avant!
 Fly thither whence thou fledst: if from this hour
 Within these hallow'd limits thou appear,
 Back to th' infernal pit I drag thee chain'd, 965
 And seal thee so, as henceforth not to scorn
 The facil gates of Hell too slightly barr'd.
 So threaten'd he, but Satan to no threats
 Gave heed, but waxin more in rage reply'd.
 Then when I am thy captive talk of chains, 970
 Proud limitary Cherub, but e're then
 Far heavier load thyself expect to feel
 From my prevailing arm; though Heaven's King
 Ride on thy wings, and thou with thy compeers,
 Us'd to the yoke, draw'st his triumphant wheels 975
 In progress through the road of Heav'n star-pav'd.
 While thus he spake, th' Angelic Squadron bright,
 Turn'd fiery red, sharp'ning in mooned horns
 Their phalanx, and began to hem him round
 With ported spears, as thick as when a field 980
 Of Ceres ripe for harvest waving bends
 Her bearded grove of ears, which way the wind
 Sways them; the careful plowman doubting stands,
 Lest on the threshing floor his hopeful sheaves
 Prove chaff. On th' other side Satan alarm'd, 985
 Col-

Collecting all his might dilated stood
 Like Teneriff, or Atlas, unremov'd:
 His stature reach'd the sky, and on his crest
 Sat horror plum'd; nor wanted in his grasp
 What seem'd both spear and shield. Now dreadful deeds
 Might have ensu'd; nor only Paradise 991
 In this commotion, but the starry cope
 Of Heav'n perhaps, or all the elements
 At least had gone to wrack, disturb'd and torn
 With violence of this conflict, had not soon 995
 Th' Eternal to prevent such horrid fray
 Hung forth in Heav'n his golden scales, yet seen
 Betwixt Asirea and the Scorpion sign,
 Wherein all things created first he weigh'd,
 The pendulous round earth with ballanc'd air 1000
 In counterpoise; now ponders all events,
 Battels and realms: in these he put two weights
 The sequel each of parting and of fight;
 The latter quick up flew, and kick'd the beam:
 Which Gabriel spying, thus bespake the Fiend. 1005
 Satan, I know thy strength, and thou know'st mine,
 Neither our own but giv'n: what folly then
 To boast what arms can do, since thine no more
 Than Heav'n permits, nor mine; though doubled now
 To trample thee as mire: for proof look up, 1010
 And read thy lot in yon coelestial sign,
 Where thou art weigh'd, and shown how light, how weak,
 If thou resist. — The Fiend look'd up, and knew
 His mounted scale aloft: nor more; but fled
 Murm'ring, and with him fled the shades of night. 1015

The End of the Fourth Book.

B O O K V.

Now morn her rosy steps in th' eastern clime
 Advancing, sow'd the earth with orient pearl,
 When Adam wak'd: so custom'd; for his sleep
 Was aery light, from pure digestion bred,

And

And temperate vapors bland, which th' only found^{*)} 5
 Of leaves and fuming rills, Aurora's fan,
 Lightly dispers'd, and the shrill matin song
 Of birds on every bough. So much the more
 His wonder was, to find unwaken'd Eve
 With tresses discompos'd, and glowing cheek,
 As through unquiet rest: he on his side
 Leaning half rais'd, with looks of cordial love
 Hung over her enamour'd, and beheld
 Beauty, which whether waking or asleep,
 Shot forth peculiar graces: then, with voice
 Mild as when Zephyrus on Flora breathes,
 Her hand soft touching, whisper'd thus: Awake
 My fairest, my espous'd, my latest found,
 Heav'n's last best gift, my ever new delight!
 Awake! the morning shines, and the fresh field
 Calls us, we lose the prime, to mark how spring
 Our tended plants, how blows the citron grove,
 What drops the myrrh, and what the balmy reed,
 How nature paints her colors, how the bee
 Sits on the bloom extracting liquid sweet. 25
 Such whispering wak'd her, but with start'd eye
 On Adam, whom embracing, thus she spake.
 O sole in whom my thoughts find all repose,
 My glory, my perfection! glad I see
 Thy face, and morn return'd; for I this night
 Such night till this I never pass'd, have dream'd,
 If dream'd, not, as I oft am wont, of thee,
 Works of day past, or morrow's next design,
 But of offence and trouble, which my mind
 Knew never till this irksome night. Methought
 Close at mine ear one call'd me forth to walk
 With gentle voice, I thought it thine; it said,

STOM ONI G 2 Why

^{*)} Perhaps these two Verses were originally dictated by the Author thus:

And temperate vapors bland from fuming rills,
 Which th' only found of leaves, Aurora's fan,
 Lightly dispers'd, &c.

Why sleep'st thou Eve? now is the pleasant time,
 The cool, the silent, save where silence yields
 To the night-warbling bird, that now awake 40
 Tunes sweetest his love-labor'd song; now reigns
 Full orb'd the moon, and with more pleasant light
 Shadowy sets off the face of things; in vain,
 If none regard: heav'n wakes with all his eyes,
 Whom to behold but thee, nature's desire? 45
 In whose sight all things joy, with ravishment
 Attracted by thy beauty still to gaze.
 I rose as at thy call, but found thee not:
 To find thee I directed then my walk;
 And on, methought, alone I pass'd thro' ways 50
 That brought me on a sudden to the trees
 Of interdicted knowledge: fair it seem'd,
 Much fairer to my fancy than by day:
 And as I wond'ring look'd, beside it stood
 One shap'd and wing'd like one of those from Heav'n
 By us oft seen: his dewy locks distill'd 55
 Ambrosia; on that tree he also gaz'd;
 And O fair plant, said he, with fruit furcharg'd,
 Deigns none to ease thy load and taste thy sweet,
 Nor God, nor Man? Is knowledge so despis'd? 60
 Or envy, or what reserve forbids to taste?
 Forbid who will, none shall from me withhold
 Longer thy offer'd good: why else set here?
 This said he paus'd not, but with vent'rous arm
 He pluck'd, he tasted: me damp horror chill'd 65
 At such bold words, touch'd with a deed so bold.
 But he thus, overjoy'd, O fruit divine!
 Sweet of thyself, but much more sweet thus crompt!
 Forbidden here it seems, as only fit
 For Gods, yet able to make Gods of Men: 70
 And why not Gods of Men, since good the more
 Communicated, more abundant grows,
 The author not impair'd, but honor'd more?
 Here, happy creature, fair Angelic Eve!
 Partake thou also: happy though thou art, 75

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Happier thou may'st be, worthier canst not be:
 Taste this, and be henceforth among the Gods
 Thyself a Goddess, not to earth confin'd,
 But sometimes in the air, as we, sometimes
 Ascend to Heav'n by merit thine, and see 80
 What life the Gods live there, and such live thou.
 So saying, he drew nigh, and to me held,
 Ev'n to my mouth, of that same fruit held part
 Which he had pluck'd: the pleasant savoury smell
 So quicken'd appetite, that I, methought, 85
 Could not but taste. Forthwith up to the clouds
 With him I flew, and underneath beheld
 The earth outstretch'd immense, a prospect wide,
 And various: wond'ring at my flight and change
 To this high exaltation; suddenly 90
 My guide was gone, and I, methought, sunk down,
 And fell asleep: but O, how glad I wak'd
 To find this but a dream! Thus Eve her night
 Related, and thus Adam answer'd sad.

Best image of myself, and dearer half! 95
 The trouble of thy thoughts this night in sleep
 Affects me equally; nor can I like
 This uncouth dream, of evil sprung I fear,
 Yet evil whence? in thee can harbour none,
 Created pure. But know that in the soul 100
 Are many lesser faculties that serve
 Reason as chief: among these fancy next
 Her office holds: of all external things
 Which the five watchful senses represent,
 She forms imaginations, aery shapes, 105
 Which Reason joining or disjoining, frames
 All what we affirm, or what deny, and call
 Our knowledge or opinion; then retires
 Into her private cell, when nature rests.
 Oft in her absence mimic fancy wakes 110
 To imitate her; but misjoining shapes,
 Wild work produces oft, and most in dreams;
 Ill matching words and deeds long past or late.

Some such resemblances methinks I find
 Of our last evening's talk, in this thy dream, 113
 But with addition strange: yet be not sad.
 Evil into the mind of God or Man
 May come and go, so unapprov'd, and leave
 No spot or blame behind: which gives me hope
 That what in sleep thou didst abhor to dream, 120
 Waking thou never wilt consent to do.
 Be not dishearten'd then, nor cloud those looks,
 That wont to be more chearful and serene,
 Than when fair morning first smiles on the world:
 And let us to our fresh employments rise 125
 Among the groves, the fountains and the flow'rs,
 That open now their choicest bosom'd smells
 Reserv'd from night, and kept for thee in store.

So chear'd he his fair spouse, and she was chear'd,
 But silently a gentle tear let fall 130
 From either eye, and wip'd them with her hair:
 Two other precious drops that ready stood,
 Each in their crystal sluice, he e're they fell
 Kiss'd, as the gracious signs of sweet remorse
 And pious awe, that fear'd to have offended. 135

So all was clear'd, and to the field they haste.
 But first from under shady arborous roof,
 Soon as they forth were come to open sight
 Of day-spring, and the Sun, who scarce uprisen,
 With wheels yet hovering o'er the ocean brim, 140
 Shot parallel to th' earth his dewy ray,
 Discovering in wide landscape all the east
 Of Paradise, and Eden's happy plains.
 Lowly they bow'd, adoring, and began
 Their orisons, each morning duly paid 145
 In various style; for neither various style
 Nor holy rapture wanted they to praise
 Their Maker, in fit strains pronounc'd or sung
 Unmeditated, such prompt eloquence
 Flow'd from their lips, in prose or numerous verse. 150
 More tuneable, than needed lute or harp

To

To add more sweetness, and they thus began.

These are thy glorious works, Parent of good!
Almighty! thine this universal frame,
Thus wondrous fair; thyself how wondrous then! 155
Unspeakable! who sitst above these Heav'ns,
To us invisible, or dimly seen
In these thy lowest works; yet these declare
Thy goodness, beyond thought, and pow'r divine.
Speak ye who best can tell, ye sons of light, 160
Angels! for ye behold him, and with songs
And choral symphonies, day without night,
Circle his throne rejoicing; ye in Heav'n,
On earth join all ye creatures to extol
Him first, him last, him midst, and without end! 165
Fairest of stars, last in the train of night,
If better thou belong not to the dawn,
Sure pledge of day, that crown'st the smiling morn
With thy bright circlet, praise him in thy sphere
While day arises, that sweet hour of prime. 170
Thou Sun, of this great world both eye and soul,
Acknowledge him thy greater, sound his praise
In thy eternal course, both when thou climbst,
And when high noon hast gain'd, and when thou fall'st.
Moon, that now meet'st orient sun, now fly'st, 175
With the fix'd stars, fix'd in their orb that flies;
And ye five other wand'ring fires, that move
In mystic dance not without song, resound
His praise, who out of darkness call'd up light.
Air, and ye elements, the eldest birth 180
Of Nature's womb, that in quaternion run
Perpetual circle, multiform, and mix
And nourish all things, let your ceaseless change
Vary to our Great Maker still new praise.
Ye mists and exhalations that now rise 185
From hill or steaming lake, dusky or gray,
Till the sun paint your fleecy skirts with gold,
In honor to the world's great author rise;
Whether to deck with clouds, th' uncolored sky,

Or wet the thirsty earth with falling showers,
 Rising or falling still advance his praise;
 His praise, ye winds, that from four quarters blow,
 Breathe soft or loud; and wave your tops, ye Pines,
 With every plant, in sign of worship wave.

Fountains and ye, that warble, as ye flow,
 Melodious murmurs, warbling tune his praise.

Join voices, all ye living souls, ye birds,
 That singing up to Heaven, gate ascend,
 Bear on your wings and in your notes his praise.

Ye that in waters glide, and ye that walk
 The earth, and stately tread, or lowly creep:

Witness if I be silent, morn or even,
 To hill, or valley, fountain, or fresh shade,
 Made vocal by my song, and taught his praise.

Hail universal Lord! be bounteous still
 To give us only good: and if the night

Have gather'd ought of evil or conceal'd,
 Disperse it, as now light dispels the dark.

So pray'd they innocent, and to their thoughts
 Firm peace recover'd soon and wonted calm.

On to their morning's rural work they hasted
 Among sweet dews and flow'rs; where any row

Of fruit-trees over-woody reach'd to far
 Their pamper'd boughs, and needed hands to check

Fruitless embraces: or they led the vine
 To wed her elm; she spous'd about him twines

Her marriageable arms, and with her brings
 Her dow'r th' adopted clusters, to adorn

His barren leaves. Them thus employ'd beheld
 With pity Heav'n's high King, and to him call'd

Raphael, the sociable spirit, that deign'd
 To travel with Tobias, and secur'd

His marriage with the seventimes wedded maid.

Raphael, said he, thou hear'st what stir on earth
 Satan from Hell scap'd thro' the darksome gulfe

Hath rais'd in Paradise, and how disturb'd
 This night the human pair, how he designs

In

In them at once to ruin all mankind.
 Go therefore; half this day as friend with friend
 Converse with Adam, in what bow'r or shade 230
 Thou find'st him from the heat of noon retir'd,
 To respite his day-labor with repast,
 Or with repose: and such discourse bring on,
 As may advise him of his happy state,
 Happiness in his pow'r left free to will, 235
 Left to his own free will; his will though free,
 Yet mutable: whence warn him to beware
 He swerve not too secure. Tell him withal
 His danger, and from whom; what enemy
 Late fall'n himself from Heav'n, is plotting now 240
 The fall of others from like state of bliss:
 By violence? no, for that shall be withstood;
 But by deceit and lies; this let him know,
 Lest wilfully transgressing he pretend
 Surprisal, unadmonish'd, unforewarn'd. 245

So spake th' eternal Father, and fulfill'd
 All justice: nor delay'd the winged saint
 After his charge receiv'd; but from among
 Thousand celestial Ardors, where he stood
 Veil'd with his gorgeous wings, up springing light, 250
 Flew through the midst of Heav'n: th' angelic quires
 On each hand parting, to his speed gave way
 Through all th' empyreal road; till at the gate
 Of Heav'n arriv'd, the gate self-open'd wide
 On golden hinges turning, as by work 255
 Divine, the sov'reign architect had fram'd,
 From hence no cloud, or, to obstruct his sight,
 Star interpos'd, however small he sees,
 Not unconform to other shining globes,
 Earth, and the gard'n of God, with cedars crown'd 260
 Above all hills. As when by night the glass
 Of Galileo, less assur'd, observes
 Imagin'd lands and regions in the moon;
 Or pilot, from amidst the Cyclades,
 Delos, or Samos, first appearing, kens 265

A cloudy spot. Down thither prone in flight
 He speeds, and through the vast ethereal sky
 Sails between worlds and worlds: with steady wing
 Now on the polar winds; then with quick fan
 Winnows the buxom air; till within soar 270
 Of towring eagles, to all the fowls he seems
 A Phoenix gaz'd by all, as that sole bird,
 When to inshrine his reliques in the sun's
 Bright temple; to Egyptian Thebes he flies.
 At once on the eastern cliff of Paradise 275
 He lights, and to his proper shape returns,
 A Seraph wing'd: six wings he wore, to shade
 His lineaments divine; the pair that clad
 Each shoulder broad, came mantling o'er his breast
 With regal ornament: the middle pair, 280
 Girt like a starry zone his waist, and round
 Skirted his loins and thighs with downy gold
 And colors dipt in heav'n: the third his feet
 Shadow'd from either heel with feather'd mail,
 Sky-tinctur'd grain. Like Maia's son he stood, 285
 And shook his plumes, that heav'nly fragrance fill'd
 The circuit wide. Straight knew him all the bands
 Of Angels under watch; and to his state,
 And to his message high in honor rise;
 For on some message high they guess'd him bound. 290
 Their glittering tents he pass'd, and now is come
 Into the blissfull field, through groves of myrrh,
 And flow'ring odors, cassia, nard, and balm;
 A wilderness of sweets! for Nature here
 Wanton'd as in her prime, and play'd at will 295
 Her virgin fancies, pouring forth more sweet,
 Wild above rule or art; enormous bliss!
 Him through the spicy forest onward come
 Adam discern'd; as in the door he sat
 Of his cool bow'r, while now the mounted Sun 300
 Shot down direct his fervid rays to warm
 Earth's inmost womb, more warmth than Adam needs:
 And Eye within, due at her hour prepar'd

For

For dinner savoury fruits, of taste to please
True appetite, and not disrelish thirst 305
Of nectarous draughts between, from milky stream,
Berry or grape; to whom thus Adam call'd.

Haste hither Eve, and worth thy sight behold
Eastward among those trees, what glorious shape
Comes this way moving; seems another morn 310
Ris'n on mid-noon; some great behest from Heav'n
To us herhaps he brings, and will vouchsafe
This day to be our guest. But go with speed,
And what thy stores contain, bring forth and pour
Abundance, fit to honor and receive 315
Our heavenly stranger: well we may afford
Our givers their own gifts, and large bestow
From large bestow'd, where Nature multiplies
Her fertil growth, and by disburd'ning grows
More fruitful, which instructs us not to spare. 320

To whom thus Eve: Adam, earth's hallow'd mould;
Of God inspir'd, small store will serve, where store,
All seasons, ripe for use hangs on the stalk;
Save what by frugal storing firmness gains
To nourish, and superfluous moist consumes. 325
But I will haste, and from each bough and brake,
Each plant, and jucieft gourd, will pluck such choice
To entertain our Angel-guest, as he
Beholding shall confess, that here on Earth
God had dispens'd his bounties, as in Heav'n. 330

So saying, with dispatchful looks in haste,
She turns, on hospitable thoughts intent
What choice to chuse for delicacy best,
What order, so contriv'd as not to mix
Tastes, not well join'd, inelegant, but bring 335
Taste after taste upheld with kindest change:
Bestirs her then, and from each tender stalk
Whatever earth all-bearing mother yields
In India East or West, or middle shore
In Pontus, or the Punic coast, or where 340
Alcinous reign'd, fruit of all kinds, in coat

Rough,

Rough or smooth rin'd, or bearded husk, or shell,
 She gathers; tribute large and on the board
 Heaps with unsparing hand: for drink the grape
 She crushes, inoffensive must, and meaths
 From many a berry; and from sweet kernels press'd,
 She tempers dulcet creams; nor these to hold
 Wants her fit vessels pure: then strows the ground
 With rose, and odors from the shrub unfum'd.

Mean while our primitive great life, to meet
 His god-like guest, walks forth, without more train
 Accompanied than with his own complete
 Perfections; in himself was all his state:
 More solemn than the tedious pomp that waits
 On Princes, when their rich retinue long
 Of horses led, and grooms besmear'd with gold
 Dazles the crowd, and sets them all agape.
 Nearer his presence Adam though not aw'd,
 Yet with submiss approach, and reverence meek,
 As to a superior nature, bowing low,
 Thus said. Native of Heaven! for other place
 None can than Heaven such glorious shape contain,
 Since by descending from the thrones above,
 Those happy places thou hast deign'd a while
 To want, and honor these, vouchsafe with us
 Two only, who yet by sov'reign gift possess
 This spacious ground, in yonder shady bower
 To rest; and what the garden choicest bears
 To fit and taste, till this meridian heat
 Be over, and the Sun more cool decline.

Whom thus th' angelic Virtue answer'd mild.
 Adam, I therefore came, nor art thou such
 Created, or such place hast here to dwell,
 As may not oft invite, though spirits of Heav'n,
 To visit thee: lead on then where thy bow'r
 O'ershades; for these mid-hours, till ev'ning rise,
 I have at will. So to the sylvan lodge
 They came, that like Pomona's arbor smil'd,
 With flowrets deck'd, and fragrant smells: but Eve

Und-

Undeck'd, save with herself, more lovely fair 380
Than Wood-Nymph, or the fairest Goddess feign'd
Of three that in mount Ida naked strove,
Stood t'entertain her guest from Heav'n; no veil
She needed, virtue-proof, no t'ought infirm
Alter'd her cheek, On whom the Angel *Hail* 385
Bestow'd, the holy salutation us'd
Long after to blest Mary, second Eve,
Hail Mother of Mankind! whose fruitful womb
Shall fill the world more numerous with thy sons,
Than with these various fruits the trees of God 390
Have heap'd this table. Rais'd of grassy turf
Their table was, and mossy seats had round;
And on her ample square from side to side
All Autumn pil'd, though Spring and Autumn here
Danc'd hand in hand. A while discourse they hold;
No fear lest dinner cool; when thus began 396
Our author. Heav'n! stranger! please to taste
These bounties which our nourisher, from whom
All perfect good, unmeasur'd out, descends,
To us for food and for delight hath caus'd 400
The earth to yield: unfavoury food perhaps
To spiritual natures; only this I know,
That one celestial Father gives to all,
To whom the Angel. Therefore what he gives,
Whose praise be ever sung! to man, in part 405
Spiritual, may of purest spirits be found
No ingrateful food, and food alike those pure
Intelligential substances require,
As doth your rational; and both contain
Within them every lower faculty 410
Of sense, whereby they hear, see, smell, touch, taste,
Tasting concoct, digest, assimilate,
And corporeal to incorporeal turn.
Far know, whatever was created, needs
To be sustain'd and fed: of elements 415
The grosser feeds the purer; earth the sea;
Earth and the sea feed air; the air, those fires

Ethe-

Ethereal; and as lowest first the moon;
 Whence in her visage round those spots, unpurg'd
 Vapors, not yet into her substance turn'd. 420
 Nor doth the moon no nourishment exhale
 From her moist continent to higher orbs.
 The Sun, that light imparts to all, receives
 From all his alimential recompense,
 In humid exhalations; and at ev'n 425
 Sups with the ocean. Though in Heav'n the trees
 Of life ambrosial fruitage bear, and vines
 Yield Nectar; though from of the boughs each morn
 We brush mellifluous dew; and find the ground
 Cover'd with pearly grain: yet God hath here 430
 Varied his bounty so with new delights,
 As may compare with Heaven, and to taste
 Think not I shall be nice. — So down they fat,
 And to their viands fell, nor seemingly
 The Angel, nor in mist, the common gloss 435
 Of Theologians, but with keen dispatch
 Of real hunger, and concoctive heat
 To-transubstantiate: what redounds, transpires
 Through spirits with ease, nor wonder; if by fire
 Of sooty coal the empiric alchymist 440
 Can turn, or holds it possible to turn,
 Metals of drossiest ore to perfect gold,
 As from the mine. Mean while at table Eve
 Minister'd naked, and their flowing cups
 With pleasant liquors crown'd. O innocence 445
 Deserving Paradise! if ever, then,
 The had the sons of God excuse if have been
 Enamour'd at that sight: but in those hearts
 Love unalibidinous reign'd, nor jealousy
 Was understood, the injur'd lover's Hell. 450

Thus when with meats and drinks they had suffic'd,
 Not burden'd nature, sudden mind arose
 In Adam, not to let th' occasion pass
 Giv'n him by this great conference, to know
 Of things above this world, and of their being 455

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Who dwell in Heav'n: whose excellence he saw
 Transcend his own so far, whose radiant forms,
 Divine effulgence! whose high power so far
 Exceeded human; and his wary speech
 Thus to th' empyreal minister he fram'd.

Inhabitant with God! now know I well
 Thy favor, in this honor done to man;
 Under whose lowly roof thou hast vouchsaf'd
 To enter, and these earthly fruits to taste,
 Food not of Angels, yet accepted so,
 As that more willingly thou couldst not seem
 At Heav'n's high feasts to have fed: yet what compare?

To whom the winged Hierarch reply'd.
 O Adam! one Almighty is, from whom
 All things proceed, and up to him return
 If not depriv'd from good, created all,

Such to perfection, one first matter all,
 Indued with various forms, various degrees
 Of substance, and in things that live, of life;

But more refin'd, more spiritous, and pure,
 As nearer to him plac'd, or nearer tending,
 Each in their several active spheres assign'd;
 Till body up to spirit work, in bounds

Proportion'd to each kind. So from the root
 Springs lighter the green stalk; from thence the leaves
 More aery; last, the bright consummate flower
 Spirits odorous breathes; flowers, and their fruit,

Man's nourishment, by gradual scale sublim'd,
 To vital spirits aspire, to animal,
 To intellectual; give both life and sense,

Fancy and understanding; whence the soul
 Reason receives; and reason is her being,
 Discursive, or intuitive; discourse

Is ofttest yours, the latter most is ours;
 Differing but in degree, of kind the same.
 Wonder not then, what God for you saw good

If I refuse not, but convert, as you,
 To proper substance. Time may come, when Men

With

With Angels may participate, and find
 No inconvenient diet, nor too light fare: 495
 And from these corporal nutriment perhaps
 Your bodies may at last turn all to spirit,
 Improv'd by tract of time; and wing'd ascend
 Ethereal, as we; or may at choice, dwell
 Here, or in heav'nly Paradises dwell; 500
 If ye be found obedient, and retain
 Unalterably firm his love entire,
 Whose progeny you are. Mean while, enjoy
 Your fill what happiness this happy state
 Can comprehend, incapable of more. 505

To whom the patriarch of mankind reply'd.
 O favourable spirit, propitious guest!
 Well hast thou taught the way that might direct
 Our knowledge, and the scale of nature set
 From center to circumference; whereon 510
 In contemplation of created things
 By steps we may ascent to God. But say,
 What meant that caution join'd, if ye be found
 Obedient? Can we want obedience then
 To him, or possibly his love desert, 515
 Who form'd us from the dust, and plac'd us here,
 Full to the utmost measure of what bliss
 Human desires can seek, or apprehend?

To whom the Angel. Son of heav'n and earth,
 Attend: That thou art happy, owe to God: 520
 That thou continuest such, owe to thyself,
 That is, to thy obedience; therein stand.
 This was that caution giv'n thee; he advis'd,
 God made thee perfect, not immutable;
 And good he made thee; but to persevere 525
 He left it in thy pow'r, ordain'd thy will
 By nature free, not over-rul'd by fate
 Inextricable, or strict necessity.
 Our voluntary service he requires,
 Not our necessitated; such with him 530
 Finds no acceptance, nor can find; for how

Can

Can hearts, not free, be try'd whether they serve
Willing or no, who will but what they must
By destiny, and can no other chuse?

Myself and all th' Angelic host, that stand 535

In sight of God inthron'd, our happy state

Hold, as you yours, while our obedience holds;

On other surety none: freely we serve,

Because we freely love; as in our will

To love, or not; in this we stand or fall. 540

And some are fall'n, to disobedience fall'n,

And so from Heaven to deepest Hell; O fall

From what high state of bliss, into what woe!

To whom our great progenitor. Thy words

Attentive, and with more delighted ear, 545

Divine instructor! I have heard, than when

Cherubic songs by night from neighb'ring hills

Aereal music send. Nor knew I not

To be both will and deed created free;

Yet that we never shall forget to love 550

Our Maker, and obey him whose command

Single is yet so just, my constant thoughts

Astur'd me, and still assure; though what thou tell'st

Hath pass'd in Heav'n, some doubt within me move,

But more desire to hear, if thou consent. 555

The full relation; which must needs be strange,

Worthy of sacred silence to be heard:

And we have yet large day, for scarce the sun

Hath finish'd half his journey, and scarce begins

His other half in the great zone of Heav'n. 560

Thus Adam made request, and Raphael

After short pause assenting, thus began.

High matter thou injoin'st me, O prime of men!

Sad task and hard! For how shall I relate

To human sense th' invisible exploits 565

Of warring spirits? How, without remorse,

The ruin of so many glorious once,

And perfect, while they stood? how last unfold

The secrets of another world, perhaps

Not lawful to reveal! Yet for thy good 570
 This is dispens'd: and what surmounts the reach
 Of human sense, I shall delineate so,
 By lik'ning spiritual to corporeal forms,
 As may express them best: though, what if earth
 Be but the shadow of heav'n, and things therein 575
 Each to' other like, more than on earth is thought?

As yet this world was not, and Chaos wild
 Reign'd where these Heav'n's now roll, where earth now
 Upon her centre pois'd; when on a day, (rests 580
 For time, though in eternity, apply'd
 To motion, measures all things durable
 By present, past, and future, on such day
 As Heav'n's great year brings forth, th' empyreal host
 Of Angels by imperial summons call'd,
 Innumerable before th' Almighty's throne 585
 Forthwith, from all the ends of Heav'n, appear'd
 Under their Hierarchs in orders bright:
 Ten thousand thousand ensigns high advanc'd,
 Standarts, and gonfalons 'twixt van and rear,
 Stream in the air, and for distinction serve 590
 Of hierarchies, of orders, and degrees:
 Or in their glittering tissues bear imblaz'd
 Holy memorials, acts of zeal and love
 Recorded eminent. Thus when in orbs
 Of circuit inexpressible they stood, 595
 Orb within orb, the Father Infinite,
 By whom in bliss imbosom'd sat the Son,
 Amidst, as from a flaming mount, whose top
 Brightness had made invisible, thus spake.

Hear all ye Angels, progeny of light, 600
 Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Pow'rs!
 Hear my decree, which unrevok'd shall stand.
 This day I have begot whom I declare
 My only Son, and on this holy hill
 Him have anointed, whom ye now behold 605
 At my right hand; your Head I him appoint:
 And by myself have sworn to him shall bow

570

All knees in Heav'n, and shall confess him Lord.

Under his great vice-gerent reign abide

United, as one individual soul,

610

For ever happy: Him who disobeys,

Me disobeys, breaks union, and that day,

575

Cast out from God and blessed vision, falls

?

Into utter darkness, deep ingulf'd, his place

Ordain'd without redemption, without end.

615

now

So spake th' Omnipotent, and with his words

rests

All seem'd well pleas'd: all seem'd, but were not all.

580

That day, as other solemn days, they spent

In song and dance about the sacred hill;

oft

Mystical dance, which yonder starry sphere

620

Of Planets and of fix'd in all her wheels

Resembles nearest, mazes intricate,

585

Eccentric, intervolv'd, yet regular

Then most, when most irregular they seem;

And in their motions harmony divine

625

So smooths her charming tones, that God's own ear

Listens delighted. Evening now approach'd,

590

For we have also our ev'ning and our morn,

We ours for change del-ctable, not need,

Forthwith from dance to sweet repast they turn

630

Desirous: all in circles as they stood,

Tables are set, and on a sudden pi'd

595

With Angels food, and rubied nectar flows

In pearl, in diamond, and massy gold,

Fruit of delicious vines, the growth of Heaven.

635

On flow'rs repot'd, and with fresh flow'rets crown'd,

They eat, they drink, and in communion sweet

600

Quaff immortality and joy, secure

Of surfeit, where full measure only bounds

Excess, before th' all-bounteous King, who show'd

640

With copious hand, rejoicing in their joy.

Now, when ambrosial night with clouds exhal'd

605

From that high mount of God, whence light and shade

Spring both, the face of brightest Heav'n had chang'd

To grateful twilight, for night comes not there

645

All

In darker veil, and roseate dew dispos'd
 All but th' unsleeping eyes of God to rest;
 Wide over all the plain, and wider far
 Than all this globose earth in plain outspread,
 Such are the courts of God! th' Angelic throng 650
 Dispers'd in bands and files, their camp extend
 By living streams among the trees of life,
 Pavilions numberless, and sudden rear'd,
 Celestial tabernacles, where they slept
 Fann'd with cool winds! save those who in their course
 Melodious hymns, about the sov'reign throne, 656
 Alternate all night long. But not so wak'd
 Satan to call him now, his former name
 Is heard no more in Heaven. He of the first,
 If not the first Arch-Angel, great in pow'r, 660
 In favor and preeminence, yet fraught
 With envy against the Son of God, that day
 Honor'd by his great Father, and proclaim'd
 Messiah; King anointed, could not bear
 Thro' pride that sight, and thought himself impair'd. 665
 Deep malice thence conceiving and disdain,
 Soon as midnight brought on the dusky hour,
 Friendliest to sleep and silence, he resolv'd
 With all his legions to dislodge, and leave
 Unworshipt, unbey'd the throne supreme 670
 Contemptuous, and his next subordinate
 Awak'ning, thus to him in secret spake.

Sleep'st thou, companion dear! what sleep can close
 Thy eye-lids? and remember'st what decree
 Of yesterday, so late hath pass'd the lips 675
 Of Heaven's Almighty? Thou to me thy thoughts
 Wast wont, I mine to thee was wont t' impart:
 Both waking we were one; how then can now
 Thy sleep dissent? New laws thou feest impos'd:
 New laws from him who reigns, new minds may raise
 In us who serve; new counsels, to debate
 What doubtful may ensue: more in this place
 To utter is not safe. Assemble thou

Of all those myriads which we lead the chief:
 Tell them that by command, e'er yet dim night 685
 Her shadowy cloud withdraws, I am to haste,
 And all who under me their banners wave,
 Homeward, with flying march, where we possess
 The quarters of the north; there to prepare
 Fit entertainment to receive our King, 690

The greath Messiah, and his new commands;
 Who speedily through all Hierarchies
 Intends to pass triumphant, and give laws.

So spake the false Arch-Angel, and infus'd
 Bad influence into th' unwary breast 695
 Of his associate: he together calls,

Or several one by one, the regent Pow'rs,
 Under him regent, tells, as he was taught,
 That the Most High commanding, now ere night,
 Now ere dim night had disincumber'd heav'n, 700

The great hierarchal standard was to move:
 Tells the suggested cause, and casts between
 Ambiguous words, and jealousies, to sound
 Or taint integrity: but all obey'd
 The wonted signal, and superior voice 705

Of their great Potentate; for great indeed
 His name, and high was his degree in Heav'n,
 His count'nance, as the morning star that guides
 The starry flock allur'd them; and with lies
 Drew after him the third part of Heav'n's host. 710

Mean-while th' Eternal eye, whose sights discerns
 Abstrused thoughts, from forth his holy mount,
 And from within the golden lamps that burn
 Nightly before him, saw without their light
 Rebellion rising, saw in whom, how spread 715
 Among the Sons of Morn, what multitudes
 Were banded to oppose his high decree;
 And smiling to his only Son, thus said.

Son, thou in whom my glory I behold
 In full resplendence, Heir of all my might! 720
 Nearly it now concerns us to be sure

Of our Omnipotence; and with what arms
 We mean to hold what anciently we claim
 Of Deity or empire: such a foe
 Is rising, who intends to erect his throne 725
 Equal to ours, throughout the spacious north:
 Nor so content, hath in his thought to try
 In battel, what our pow'r is, or our right.
 Let us advise, and to this hazard draw
 With speed what force is left, and all employ 730
 In our defense, lest unawares we lose
 This our high place, our sanctuary, our hill.

To whom the Son with calm aspect, and clear,
 Lightning divine, ineffable, serene!
 Made answer. Mighty Father, thou thy foes 735
 Justly hast in derision and secure
 Laugh'd at their vain designs and tumults vain,
 Matter to me of glory, whom their hate
 Illustrates, when they see all regal pow'r
 Giv'n me to quell their pride; and in event 740
 Know whether I be dextrous to subdue
 Thy Rebels, or be found the worst in Heav'n.

So spake the Son: but Satan with his powers
 Far was advanc'd on winged speed; an host
 Innumerable as the stars of night, 745
 Or, stars of morning, dew-drops, which the Sun
 Impearls on every leaf and every flow'r.
 Regions they pass'd, and mighty regencies
 Of Seraphim, and Potentates, and Thrones,
 In their triple degrees; Regions to which 750
 All thy dominion, Adam, is no more
 Than what this garden is to all the earth,
 And all the sea; from one entire globe
 Stretch'd into longitude, which having pass'd,
 At length into the limits of the north 755
 They came, and Satan to his royal seat
 High on a hill, far blazing, as a mount
 Rais'd on a mount, with pyramids and towers
 From diamond quarries hew'n, and rocks of gold,

The

The Palace of great Lucifer; so call 760
That structure in the dialect of men
Interpreted; which not long after he,
Affecting all equality with God,
In imitation of that mount whereon
Messiah was declar'd in sight of Heav'n, 765
The Mountain of the Congregation call'd,
For thither he assembled all his train.
Pretending so commanded, to consult
About the great reception of their King,
Thither to come, and with calumnious art 770
Of counterfeited truth thus held their ears.
Thrones, Dominations, Pricedoms, Virtues, Pow'rs!
If these magnificent titles yet remain
Not merely titular! since by decree
Another now hath to himself ingross'd 775
All pow'r, and us eclips'd under the name
Of King anointed; for whom all this haste
Of midnight-march, and hurry'd meeting here,
This only to consult, how we may best
With what may be devis'd of honors new 780
Receive him, coming to receive from us
Knee-tribute yet unpaid, prostration vile,
Too much to one, but double how indur'd,
To one, and to his image now proclaim'd?
But what if better counsels might erect 785
Our minds, and teach us to cast off this yoke?
Will ye submit your necks, and choose to bend
The supple knee? Ye will not, if I trust
To know ye right; or if ye know yourselves
Natives and sons of Heav'n, possess'd before 790
By none, and if not equal all, yet free,
Equally free: for orders and degrees
Jar not with liberty, but well consist.
Who can in reason then, or right, assume
Monarchy over such as live by right 795
His equals, if in pow'r and splendor less,
In freedom equal? or can introduce

Law and edict on us, who without law
Err not? much less for this to be our Lord,
And look for adoration, to th' abuse 800
Of those Imperial Titles which assert
Our being ordain'd to govern, not to serve?

Thus far his bold discourse without controul
Had audience; when among the Seraphim,
Abdiel, than whom none with more zeal ador'd 805
The Deity, and divine commands obey'd,
Stood up, and in a flame of zeal severe,
Th' current of his fury thus oppos'd.

O argument blasphemous, false and proud!
Words which no ear ever to hear in Heav'n 810
Expected, least of all from thee, ingrate!

In place thyself so high above thy peers.
Canst thou with impious obloquy condemn
The just decree of God, pronounc'd and sworn,
That to his only Son, by right indued 815

With regal sceptre, every soul in Heav'n
Shall bend the knee, and in that honor due
Confess him rightful King? Unjust, thou say'st,
Flatly unjust, to bind with laws the free,
And equal over equals to let reign. 820

One over all with unsucceeded pow'r. —
Shalt thou give law to God? shalt thou dispute
With him the points of liberty, who made
Thee what thou art? and form'd the Pow'rs of Heav'n
Such as he pleas'd, and circumscrib'd their being? 825

Yet, by experience taught, we know how good
And of our good, and of our dignity
How provident he is; how far from thought
To make us less; bent rather to exalt

Our happy state, under one Head more near 830
United. But to grant it thee unjust,

That equal over equals monarch reign:
Thyself, though great and glorious, dost thou count,
Or all Angelic nature join'd in one,

Equal to him begotten Son? By whom, 835

As

As by his Word, the mighty Father made
 All things, ev'n thee, and all the spirits of Heav'n,
 By him created in their bright degrees;
 Crown'd them with glory, and to their glory nam'd
 Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Pow'rs,
 Essential Pow'rs! nor by his reign obscur'd,
 But more illustrious made, since he the Head

One of our number thus reduc'd becomes;
 His laws our laws, all honor to him done
 Returns our own. Cease then this impious rage,
 And tempt not these; but hasten to appease
 Th' incens'd Father, and th' incens'd Son,
 While pardon may be found, in time besought,

So spake the fervent Angel: but his zeal
 None seconded, as out of season judg'd,
 Or singular and rash: whereat rejoic'd
 Th' apostate, and more haughty thus reply'd.

That we were form'd then, say'st thou? and the work
 Of secondary hands, by task transferr'd
 From Father to his Son? Strange point and new!
 Doctrine which we would know whence learn'd: who saw
 When this creation was? Remember'st thou?

Thy making, while the Maker gave thee being?
 We know no time when we were not as now!
 Know none before us; self-begot, self-raised

By our own quick'ning pow'r, when fatal course
 Had circled his full orb, the birth mature
 Of this our native Heav'n, ethereal sons.

Our puissance is our own, our own right hand
 Shall teach us highest deeds, by proof to try
 Who is our equal: then thou shalt behold

Whether by supplication we intend
 Address, and to begirt th' Almighty throne
 Beseeching or besieging. This report,

These tidings carry to th' anointed King;
 And fly, e're evil intercept thy flight?

He said, and, as the found of waters deep,
 Hoarse murmur echo'd to his words applause,

Through the infinite host: nor less for that
The flaming Seraph fearless, though alone 875
Incompass'd round with foes, thus answer'd bold.

O alienate from God, O spirit accurs'd,
Forfaken of all good! I see thy fall
Determin'd, and thy hapless crew involv'd
In this perfidious fraud, contagion spread 880
Both of thy crime and punishment. Henceforth

No more be troubled how to quit the yoke
Of God's Messiah: those indulgent laws
Will not be now vouchsaf'd; other decrees
Against thee are gone forth without recall. 885

That golden scepter which thou didst reject,
Is now an iron rod, to bruise and break
Thy disobedience. Well thou didst advise;

Yet not for thy advice, or threats I fly
These wicked tents devoted; lest the wrath 890

Impendent, raging into sudden flame
Distinguish not: for soon expect to feel
His thunder on thy head, devouring fire!

Then who created thee lamenting learn,
When who can uncreate thee thou shalt know. 895

So spake the Seraph Abdiel, faithful found
Among the faithless, faithful only he:
Among innumerable false, unmov'd,

Unshaken, uneduc'd, untterrify'd,
His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal; 900

Nor number, nor example with him wrought
To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind
Though single. From amidst them forth he pass'd,

Long way through hostile scorn, which he sustain'd
Superior, nor of violence fear'd ought: 905

Aud, with retorted scorn, his back he turn'd
On those proud tow'rs to swift destruction doom'd.

The End of the Fifth Book.

BOOK VI.

All night the dreadful Angel unpursu'd,
 Thro' Heav'n's wide champain held his way, till morn,
 Wak'd by the circling hours, with rosy hand,
 Unbarr'd the gates of light. There is a cave
 Within the mount of God, fast by his throne,
 Where light and darkness in perpetual round
 Lodge and dislodge by turns, which makes thro' Heav'n
 Grateful vicissitude, like day and night:
 Light issues forth, and at the other door
 Obsequious darkness enters, till her hour
 To veil the Heav'n, tho' darkness there might well
 Seem twilight here: and now went forth the morn,
 Such as in highest Heav'n, array'd in gold
 Empyrean; from before her vanish'd night,
 Shot thro' with orient beams: when all the plain
 Cover'd with thick imbattel'd squadrons bright,
 Chariots, and flaming arms, and fiery steeds,
 Reflecting blaze on blaze, first met his view.
 War he perceiv'd, war in procinct, and found
 Already known what he for news had thought
 To have reported: gladly then he mix'd
 Among those friendly Pow'rs, who him receiv'd
 With joy and acclamations loud, that One,
 That of so many myriads fall'n, yet One
 Return'd, not lost. On to the sacred hill
 They led him high applauded, and present
 Before the seat supreme; from whence a voice,
 From midst a golden cloud, thus mild was heard.
 Servant of God, well done, well hast thou fought
 The better fight, who single hast maintain'd
 Against revolted multitudes the cause
 Of truth, in word mightier than they in arms:
 And for the testimony of truth hast borne
 Universal reproach; far worse to bear
 Than violence: for this was all thy care,

To

To stand approv'd in fight of God, tho' worlds
 Judg'd thee perverse. The easier conquest now
 Remains thee, aided by this host of friends,
 Back on thy foes more glorious to return,
 Than scorn'd thou didst depart; and to subdue **40**
 By force, whe reason for their law refuse,
 Right reason for their law, and for their king
 Messiah, who by right of merit reigns.
 Go, Michael, of celestial armies prince,
 And thou in military prowess next **45**
 Gabriel, lead forth to battel these my sons
 Invincible; lead forth my armed Saints,
 By thousands and by millions rang'd for fight;
 Equal in number to that godless crew,
 Rebellious: them with fire and hostile arms **50**
 Fearless assault; and to the brow of Heav'n
 Pursuing, drive them out from God and bliss,
 Into their place of punishment, the gulf
 Of Tartarus, which ready opens wide
 His fiery Chaos to receive their fall. **55**

So spake the Sovereign Voice; and clouds began
 To darken all the hill, and smoke to roll
 In dusky wreaths, reluctant flames, the sign
 Of wrath awak'd. Nor with less dread the loud
 Ethereal trumpet from on high 'gan blow: **60**
 At which command, the Powers militant
 That stood for Heav'n, in mighty quadrat join'd
 Of union irresistible, mov'd on
 In silence their bright legions, to the sound
 Of instrumental harmony, that breath'd **65**
 Heroic ardor to advent'rous deeds,
 Under their God-like leaders, in the cause
 Of God and his Messiah. On they move
 Indissolubly firm; nor obvious hill,
 Nor strait'ning vale, nor wood, nor stream divides **70**
 Their perfect ranks; for high above the ground
 Their march was, and the passive air upbore
 Their nimble tread: as when the total kind

Of birds, in orderly array on wing,
 Came summon'd over Eden, to receive 75
 Their names of thee: so, over many a tract
 Of Heav'n they march'd, and many a province wide,
 Tenfold the length of his terrene. At last,
 Far in th' horizon to the north appear'd,
 From skirt to skirt a fiery region, stretch'd 80
 In battailous aspect, and nearer view
 Bristled with upright beams innumerable
 Of rigid spears, and helmets throng'd, and shields,
 Various, with boastful argument portray'd,
 The banded Powers of Satan, hasting on 85
 With furious expedition: for the, ween'd
 That self-same day by fight, or by surprize
 To win the mount of God; and on his throne
 To set the envier of his state, the proud
 Aspirer; but their thoughts prov'd fond and vain 90
 In the mid-way. Though strange to us it seem'd
 At first, that Angel should with Angel war,
 And in fierce hostings meet, who wont to meet
 So oft in festivals of joy and love
 Unanimous, as sons of one great Sire; 95
 Hymning th' eternal Father: but the shout
 Of battel now began, and rushing sound
 Of onset ended soon each milder thought.
 High in the midst exalted as a God,
 Th' apostate in his sun-bright chariot sat, 100
 Idol of majesty divine! inclos'd
 With flaming Cherubim, and golden shields:
 Then, lighted from his gorgeous throne, for now
 'Twixt host and host but narrow space was left,
 A dreadful interval! and front to front 105
 Presented stood in terrible array,
 Of hideous length, before the cloudy van,
 On the rough edge of battel e're it join'd,
 Satan, with vast and haughty strides advanc'd,
 Came towering, arm'd in adamant and gold 110
 Abdiel that fight indur'd not, where he stood

Among

Among the mightiest, bent on highest deeds;
And thus his own undaunted heart explores.

O Heav'n! that such resemblance of the Highest
Should yet remain, where faith and reality 118
Remain not: wherefore should not strength and might
There fail where virtue fails; or weakest prove
Where boldest, though to fight unconquerable?
His puissance, trusting in th' Almighty's aid,
I mean to try; whose reason I have try'd 120
Unsound and false: nor is it ought but just,
That he who in debate of truth hath won
Should win in arms, in both disputes alike
Victor: though brutish that contest and foul,
When reason hath to deal with force; yet so 125
Most reason is that reason overcome.

So pondering, and from his armed peers
Forth-stepping opposit, half way he met
His daring foe, at this prevention more
Incens'd, and thus securely him defy'd. 130

Proud, art thou met? thy hope was to have reach'd
The height of thy aspiring unoppos'd,
The throne of God unguarded, and his side
Abandon'd at the terror of thy pow'r,
Or potent tongue: fool! not to think how vain 135
Against th' Omnipotent to rise in arms:
Who, out of smallest things, could without end
Have rais'd incessant armies to defeat
Thy folly; or with solitary hand,
Reaching beyond all limit at one blow, 140
Unaided could have finish'd thee, and whelm'd
Thy legions under darkness: but thou seest
All are not of thy train; there be wo faith
Prefer, and piety to God, though then
To thee not visible, when I alone 145
Seem'd in thy world erroneous to dissent
From all: my seest thou seest; now learn too late
How few sometimes may know, when thousand err.

Whom the grand foe with scornful eye alkance

Thus

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Thus answer'd. Ill for thee, but in wish'd hour 150
 For my revenge, first sought for thou return'st
 From flight, seditious Angel! to receive
 Thy merited reward, the first assay
 Of this right hand provok'd, since first that tongue
 Inspir'd with contradiction, durst oppose 155
 A third part of the Gods, in synod met
 Their deities to assert, who while they feel
 Vigor divine within them, can allow
 Omnipotence to none. But well thou com'st
 Before thy fellows, ambitious to win 160
 From me some plume, that thy success may show
 Destruction to the rest; this pause between,
 Unanswer'd lest thou boast, to let thee know,
 At first I thought that liberty and Heav'n,
 To heav'nly souls had been all one; but now 165
 I see that most through sloth had rather serve,
 Ministring spirits, train'd up in feast and song,
 Such hast thou arm'd, the minstrelsy of Heav'n,
 Servility with freedom to contend,
 As both their deeds compar'd this day shall prove. 170
 To whom in brief thus Abdiel stern reply'd.
 Apostate, still thou err'st, nor end wilt find
 Of erring, from the path of truth remote:
 Unjustly thou depriv'st it with the name
 Of *Servitude*, to serve whom God ordains, 175
 Or Nature: God and Nature bid the same,
 When he who rules is worthiest, and excels
 Them whom he governs. This is servitude,
 To serve th' unwise, or him who hath rebell'd
 Against his worthier, as thine now serve thee, 180
 Thyself not free, but to thyself inthrall'd;
 Yet lewdly dar'st our ministring upbraid.
 Reign thou in Hell thy kingdom, let me serve
 In Heav'n God ever blest, and his divine
 Benefits obey, worthiest to be obey'd! 185
 Yet chains in Hell, not realms expect: mean while
 From me return'd, as erst thou saist, from flight,
 This

This greeting on thy impious crest receive.
 So saying, a noble stroke he lifted high,
 Which hung not, but so swift with tempest fell 190
 On the proud crest of Satan, that no sight,
 Nor motion of swift thought, less could his shield
 Such ruin intercept: ten paces huge
 He back recoil'd; the tenth on bended knee,
 His massy spear upstay'd: as if on earth 195
 Winds under ground, or waters forcing way,
 Sidelong had push'd a mountain from his seat,
 Half-sunk with all his Pines. Amazement seisd
 The rebel thrones, but greater rage, to see
 Thus foil'd their mightiest: ours joy fill'd, and shout,
 Preface of victory and fierce desire 201
 Of battel: whereat Michaël bid sound
 Th' Arch-Angel trumpet; through the vast of Heav'n
 It sounded, and the faithful armies rung
 Hosannah to the Highest: nor stood at gaze 205
 The adverse legions, nor less hideous join'd
 The horrid shock. Now storming fury rose,
 And clamor, such as heard in Heav'n till now
 Was never; arms on armor clashing bray'd
 Horrible discord, and the madding wheels 210
 Of brazen chariots rag'd: dire was the noise
 Of conflict! over head the dismal hiss
 Of fiery darts in flaming volleys flew;
 And flying, vaulted either host with fire.
 So under fiery cope together rush'd 215
 Both battels main, with ruinous assault
 And inextinguishable rage: all Heav'n
 Resounded; and had Earth been then, all Earth
 Had to her centre shook. What wonder? when
 Millions of fierce encountring Angels fought 220
 On either side, the least of whom could wield
 These elements, and arm him with the force
 Of all their regions: how much more of pow'r
 Army against army, numberless, to raise
 Dreadful combustion warring, and disturb, 225
 Though

Though not destroy, their happy native seat;
 Had not th' eternal King omnipotent,
 From his strong hold of Heav'n, high over-rul'd
 And limited their might: though number'd such,
 As each divided legion might have seem'd
 A numerous host; in strenght each armed hand
 A legion, led in fight yet leader seem'd
 Each warrior single as in chief, expert
 When to advance; or stand, or turn the sway
 Of battle, open when, and when to close
 The ridges of grim war: no thought of flight,
 None of retreat, no unbecoming deed
 That argued fear: each on himself rely'd,
 As only in his arm the moment lay
 Of victory. Deeds of eternal fame
 Were done, but infinite; for wide was spread
 That war, and various: sometimes on firm ground
 A standing fight; then soaring on main wing
 Tormented all the air; all air seem'd then
 Conflitting fire. Long time in even scale
 The battle hung; till Satan, who that day
 Prodigious pow'r had shown, and met in arms
 No equal, ranging through the dire attack
 Of fighting Seraphim confus'd, at length
 Saw where the sword of Michael smote, and fell'd
 Squadrons at once; with huge two-handed sway
 Brandish'd aloft, the horrid edge came down
 Wide-wasting; such destruction to withstand
 He halted, and oppos'd the rocky orb
 Of tenfold adamant, his ample shield,
 A vast circumference: At his approach
 The great Arch-Angel from his warlike toil
 Surceas'd, and glad, as hoping here to end
 Intestine war in Heav'n, th' arch-foe subdu'd,
 Or captive dragg'd in chains, with hostile frown
 And visage all inflam'd, first thus began.

Author of evil! unknown till thy revolt,
 Unnam'd in Heav'n, now plenteous, as thou seest

I

These

These acts of hateful strife, hateful to all,
 Though heaviest by just measure on thyself 265
 And thy adherents: how hast thou disturb'd
 Heav'n's blessed-peace, and into nature brought
 Misery, uncreated till the crime
 Of thy rebellion! how hast thou instill'd
 Thy malice into thousands, once upright 270
 And faithful, now prov'd false! But think not here
 To trouble holy rest; Heav'n casts thee out
 From all her confines. Heav'n, the seat of bliss,
 Brooks not the works of violence and war.
 Hence then, and Evil go with thee along, 275
 Thy offspring, to the place of evil, Hell,
 Thou and thy wicked crew! there mingle broils,
 Ere this avenging sword begin thy doom,
 Or some more sudden vengeance, wing'd from God,
 Precipitate thee with augmented pain. 280

So spake the Prince of Angels: to whom thus
 The Adversary. Nor think thou with wind
 Of airy threats to awe, whom yet with deeds
 Thou canst not. Hast thou turn'd the least of these
 To flight, or if to fall, but that they rise 285
 Unvanquish'd, easier to transact with me,
 That thou shouldst hope, imperious, and with threats
 To chase me hence? Err not that so shall end
 The strife which thou call'st evil, but we stile
 The strife of glory; which we mean to win 290
 Or turn this Heav'n itself into the Hell
 Thou fablest, here however to dwell free,
 If not to reign: mean while thy utmost force,
 And join him nam'd Almighty to thy aid,
 I fly not; but have sought thee far and nigh. 295

Thy ended parle, and both address'd for fight
 Unspeakable; for who, though with the tongue
 Of Angels, can relate, or to what things
 Liken on earth conspicuous, that may lift
 Human imagination to such height 300
 Of Godlike pow'r? For likest Gods they seem'd,

Stood

Stood they or mov'd, in stature, motion, arms, **305**
 Fit to decide the empire of great Heaven.
 Now wav'd their fiery swords, and in the air
 Made horrid circles; two broad suns their shields **306**
 Blaz'd opposit, while expectation stood
 In horror: from each hand with speed retir'd,
 Where erst was thickest fight, th' angelic throng,
 And left large field, unsafe within the wind
 Of such commotion: such as, to set forth
 Great things by small, if Nature's concord broke,
 Among the constellations war were sprung,
 Two planets rushing from aspect malign
 Of fiercest opposition in mid-sky
 Should combat, and their jarring spheres confound: **315**
 Together both, with next t' almighty arm
 Up-lifted imminent, one stroke they aim'd
 That might determine, and not need repeat,
 As not of pow'r at once; nor odds appear'd
 In might or swift prevention: but the sword **320**
 Of Michael from the armory of God
 Was giv'n him temper'd so, that neither keen
 Nor solid might resist that edge: it met
 The sword of Satan, with steep force to smite
 Descending, and in half cut sheer; nor stay'd, **325**
 But with swift wheel reverse, deep entering shar'd
 All his right side: then Satan first knew pain,
 And writh'd him to and fro convolv'd; so fore
 The griding sword with discontinuous wound
 Pass'd thro' him: but th' ethereal substance clos'd, **330**
 Not long divisible; and from the gash
 A stream of nectarous humor issuing flow'd
 Sanguin, such as celestial spirits may bleed,
 And all his armor stain'd, e're while so bright.
 Forthwith on all sides to his aid was run **336**
 By Angels many and strong, who interpos'd
 Defense; while others bore him on their shields
 Back to his chariot; where it stood retir'd
 From off the files of war: there they him laid

Gnashing for anguish, and despite, and shame, 340
 To find himself not matchless, and his pride
 Humbled by such rebuke, so far beneath
 His confidence to equal God in pow'r.
 Yet soon he heal'd; for spirits that live throughout
 Vital in every part, not as frail man 345
 In entrails, heart or head, liver or reins,
 Cannot but by annihilating die:
 Nor in their liquid texture mortal wound
 Receive, no more than can the fluid air!
 All heart they live, all head, all eye, all ear, 350
 All intellect, all sense; and as they please,
 They limb themselves, and color, shape or size
 Assume, as likes them best, condense or rare.

Mean while in other parts like deeds deserv'd
 Memorial, where the might of Gabriel fought, 355
 And with fierce ensigns pierc'd the deep array
 Of Moloch furious king! who him defy'd,
 And at his chariot wheels to drag him bound
 Threaten'd, nor from the Holy One of Heav'n
 Refrain'd his tongue blasphemous; but anon 360
 Down cloven to the waste, with shatter'd arms
 And uncouth pain fled bellowing. On each wing
 Uriel and Raphaël, his vaunting foe,
 Though huge, and in a rock of diamond arm'd,
 Vanquish'd Adramelech, and Asmadai, 365
 Two potent thrones! that to be less than Gods
 Disdain'd: but meaner thoughts learn'd in their flight,
 Mangl'd with ghastly wounds through plate and mail.
 Nor stood unmindful Abdiel to annoy
 The atheist crew, but with redoubl'd blow 370
 Ariel, and Arioch, and the violence
 Of Ramiel scorch'd and blasted overthrew. —

I might relate of thousands, and their names
 Eternize here on earth; but those elect
 Angels, contented with their fame in Heav'n, 375
 Seek not the praise of men: the other sort,
 In might though wondrous, and in acts of war,

Nor

Nor of renown less eager, yet by doom
 Cancel'd from Heav'n and sacred memory,
 Nameless in dark oblivion let them dwell. 380
 For strength from truth divided, and from just,
 Illaudable, nought merits but dispraise
 And ignominy; yet to glory aspires
 Vain-glorious, and through infamy seeks fame:
 Therefore eternal silence be their doom! 385

And now, their mightiest quell'd, the battel swerv'd,
 With many an inrode gor'd; deformed rout
 Enter'd, and foul disorder: all the ground
 With shiver'd armor strown, and on a heap
 Chariot and charioteer lay overturn'd, 390
 And fiery foaming steeds: what stood, recoil'd
 O'er-wearied, thro' the faint Satanic host
 Defensive scarce, or with pale fear surpriz'd,
 Then first with fear surpriz'd and sense of pain,
 Fled ignominious: to such evil brought 395
 By sin of disobedience, till that hour
 Not liable to fear, or flight, or pain.
 Far otherwise th' inviolable Saints,
 In cubic phalanx firm, advanc'd entire,
 Invulnerable, impenetrably arm'd: 400
 Such high advantages their innocence
 Gave them above their foes, not to have sinn'd,
 Not to have disobey'd! in fight they stood
 Unwearied, unobnoxious to be pain'd
 By wound, tho' from their place by violence mov'd.

Now night her course began, and over Heav'n 406
 Inducing darkness, grateful truce impos'd,
 And silence on the odious din of war:
 Under her cloudy covert both retir'd,
 Victor and vanquish'd. On the foughten field 410
 Michael and his Angels prevalent
 Encamping, plac'd in guard their watches round,
 Cherubic waving fires: on th' other part,
 Satan with his rebellious disappear'd,
 Far in the dark dislodg'd, and void of rest, 415

His Potentates to council call'd by night;
And in the midst thus undismay'd began.

Now in danger try'd, now known in arms
Not to be overpower'd, Companions dear!
Found worthy not of liberty alone, 420

Too mean pretence, but what we more affect,
Honor, dominion, glory, and renown;
Who have sustain'd one day in doubtful fight,
And if one day, why not eternal days?

What Heaven's Lord hath powerfullest to send 425
Against us from about his throne, and judg'd
Sufficient to subdue us to his will,

But proves not so! — then fallible, it seems,
Of future we may deem him, though till now
Omniscient thought. True 't is, less firmly arm'd, 430

Some disadvantage we indur'd, and pain,
Till now not known, but known as soon condemn'd;
Since now we find this our empyreal form

Incapable of mortal injury,
Imperishable; and though pierc'd with wound, 335
Soon closing, and by native vigor heal'd,

Of evil then so small as easy think
The remedy: perhaps more valid arms,

Weapons more violent, when next we meet,
May serve to better us, and worse our foes, 440
Or equal what between us made the odds,

In nature none: if other hidden cause
Left them superior, while we can preserve
Unhurt our minds, and understanding sound,

Due search and consultation will disclose. 445

He sat; and in th' assembly next upstood
Nisroch, of Principalities the prime;

As one he stood escap'd from cruel fight,
Sore toil'd, his riven arms to havoc hewn,
And cloudy in aspect thus answering spake. 450

Deliverer from new Lords, leader to free
Enjoyment of our right as Gods! yet hard
For Gods, and too unequal work we find,
Against

Against unequal arms to fight in pain,
 Against unpain'd; impassive: from which evil 455
 Ruin must needs ensue: for what avails
 Valor or strength, tho' matchless, quell'd with pain
 Which all subdues, and makes remiss the hands
 Of mightiest? Sense of pleasure we may well
 Spare out of life perhaps, and not repine, 460
 But live content, which is the calmest life:
 But pain is perfect misery, the worst
 Of evils, and excessive, overturns
 All patience. He who therefore can invent
 With what more forcible we may offend 465
 Our yet unwounded enemies, or arm
 Ourselves with like defence, to me deserves
 No less than for deliverance what we owe.

Whereto with look compos'd Satan reply'd.
 Not uninvented that, which thou aright 470
 Believ'st so main to our success, I bring.
 Which of us who beholds the bright surface
 Of this ethereous mould, whereon we stand,
 This continent of spacious Heav'n, adorn'd
 With plant, fruit, flow'r ambrosial, gems, and gold;
 Whose eye so superficially surveys 476
 These things, as not to mind from whence they grow
 Deep under ground; materials dark and crude,
 Of spirituous and fiery spume, till touch'd
 With heavens ray, and temper'd they shoot forth 480
 So beauteous, opening to the ambient light?
 These, in their dark nativity, the deep
 Shall yield us pregnant with infernal flame:
 Which into hollow engins, long and round,
 Thick-ramm'd, at th' other bore with touch of fire 485
 Dilated and infuriate, shall send forth
 From far, with thund'ring noise, among our foes
 Such implements of mischief, as shall dash
 To pieces, and o'erwhelm whatever stands
 Adverse: that they shall fear we have disarm'd 490
 The Thunderer of his only dreaded bolt.

Nor long shall be our labor; yet ere dawn,
Effect shall end our wish. Mean while revive,
Abandon fear; to strength and counsel join'd
Think nothink hard, much less to be despair'd. 495

He ended, and his words their drooping chear
Inlighten'd, and their languish'd hope reviv'd.
Th' invention all admir'd, and each, how he
To be th' inventor miss'd, so easy it seem'd
Once found, which yet unfound most would have thought
Impossible. Yet haply of thy race 501

In future days, if malice should abound,
Some one intent on mischief, or inspir'd
With dev'lish machination, might devise
Like instrument, to plague the sons of men 505

For sin, on war and mutual slaughter bent.
Forthwith from council to the work they flew,
None arguing stood: innumerable hands
Were ready; in a moment up they turn'd
Wide the celestial soil, and saw beneath 510

Th' originals of nature in their crude
Conception: sulphurous and nitrous foam
They found, they mingled, and with subtle art,
Concocted and adusted they reduc'd
To blackest grain, and into store convey'd. 515

Part, hidden veins digg'd up, nor hath this earth
Entrails unlike, of mineral and stone,
Whereof to found their engins and their balls
Of missive ruin: part, incentive reed
Provide, pernicious with one touch to fire. 520
So all ere day-spring, under conscious night,
Secret they finish'd, and in order set,
With silent circumspection unesp'y'd.

Now when fair morn orient in Heav'n appear'd,
Up rose the victor Angels, and to arms 525
The matin trumpet sung: in arms they stood
Of golden panoply, refulgent host!
Soon banded: others from the dawning hills
Look'd round, and scouts each coast light-armed scour,
Each

Each quarter, to descry the distant foe, 530
 Where lodg'd, or whither fled, or if for fight,
 In motion or in halt; him soon they met
 Under spread ensigns moving nigh, in flow
 But firm battalion: back with speediest sail
 Zophiel, of Cherubim the swiftest wing, 535
 Came flying, and in mid air aloud thus cry'd.

Arm, warrior's, arm for fight! the foe at hand,
 Whom fled we thought, will save us long pursuit
 This day; fear not his flight; so thick a cloud
 He comes, and settled in his face I see 540
 Sad resolution, and secure. Let each
 His adamantine coad gird well, and each
 Fit well his helm, gripe fast his orb'd shield,
 Born ev'n or high; for this day will pour down,
 If I conjecture ought, no drizzling show'r, 545
 But rattling storm of arrows barb'd with fire.

So warn'd he them, aware themselves; and soon
 In order, quit of all impediment,
 Instant without disturb they took alarm,
 And onward mov'd embattel'd: when behold! 550
 Not distant far with heavy pace the foe
 Approaching gross and huge; in hollow cube
 Training his devilish enginry, impal'd
 On every side with shadowing squadrons deep,
 To hide the fraud. At interview both stood 555
 A while; but suddenly at head appear'd
 Satan, and thus was heard commanding loud.

Vanguard, to right and left the front unfold;
 That all may see who hate us, how we seek
 Peace and composure, and with open breast 560
 Stand ready to receive them, if they like
 Our overture, and turn not back perverse;
 But that I doubt: however witness Heav'n!
 Heav'n witness thou anon! while we discharge
 Freely our part: ye who appointed stand, 565
 Do as you have in charge, and briefly touch

What we propound, and loud that all may hear.
 So scoffing in ambiguous words, he scarce
 Had ended; when to right and left the front
 Divided, and to either flank retir'd: 570
 Which to our eyes discover'd, new and strange!
 A triple mounted row of pillars, laid
 On wheels, for like to pillars most they seem'd,
 Or hollow'd bodies made of oak, or fir,
 With branches lop'd, in wood or mountain fell'd, 475
 Brass, iron, stony mold; had not their mouths
 With hideous orifice gap'd on us wide,
 Portending hollow truce: at each behind
 A Seraph stood, and in his hand a reed
 Stood waving tip'd with fire; while we suspense 580
 Collected stood within our thoughts amus'd:
 Not long! for sudden all at once their reeds
 Put forth, and to a narrow vent apply'd
 With nicest touch; immediate in a flame,
 But soon obscur'd with smoke, all Heav'n appear'd, 585
 From those deep-throated engins belch'd, whose roar
 Embowel'd with outrageous noise the air,
 And all her entrails tore; disgorging foul
 Their devilish glut, chain'd thunderbolts, and hail
 Of iron globes, which on the victor host 590
 Level'd, with such impetuous fury smote,
 That whom they hit, none on their feet might stand,
 Though standing else as rocks; but down they fell
 By thousands, Angel on Arch-Angel roll'd;
 The sooner for their arms, unarm'd they might 595
 Have easily as spirits evaded swift
 By quick contraction or remove: but now
 Foul dissipation follow'd, and forc'd rout;
 Nor serv'd it to relax their ferried files:
 What should they do? if on they rush'd, repulse 600
 Repeated, and indecent overthrow
 Doubld, would render them yet more despis'd,
 And to their foes a laughter: for in view,
 Stood rank'd of Seraphim another row,

In posture to displode their second tire 605
Of thunder: back defeated to return
They worse abhorr'd. Satan beheld their plight,
And to his mates thus in derision call'd.

O friends, why come not on these victors proud?
Erewhile they fierce were coming, and when we, 610
To entertain them fair with open front,
And breast, what could we more? propounded terms
Of composition, straight they chang'd their minds,
Flew off, and into strange vagaries fell,
As they would dance: yet for a dance they seem'd 615
Somewhat extravagant and wild; perhaps
For joy of offer'd peace: but I suppose,
If our proposals once again were heard,
We should compel them to a quick result.

To whom thus Belial in like gamefome mood: 620
Leader, the terms we sent were terms of weight,
Of hard contents, and full of force urg'd home;
Such as we might perceive amus'd them all,
And stumbled many: who receives them right,
Had need from head to foot well understand; 625
Not understood, this gift they have besides,
They show us when our foes walk not upright.

So they among themselves in pleasant vein
Stood scoffing, highten'd in their thoughts beyond
All doubt of victory: eternal might 630
To match with their inventions they presum'd
So easy, and of his thunder made a scorn,
And all his host derided, while they stood
A while in trouble: but they stood not long;
Rage prompted them at length, and found them arms
Against such hellish mischief fit t' oppose, 636
Forthwith, behold the excellence, the pow'r,
Which God hath in his mighty Angels plac'd!
Their arms away they threw, and to the hills,
For earth hath this variety from Heav'n, 640
Of pleasure situate in hill and dale,
Light as the lightning glimpse they ran, they flew;

From

From their foundations loos'ning to and fro,
 They pluck'd the seated hills, with all their load,
 Rocks, waters, woods, and by the shaggy tops. 645
 Up-lifting bore them in their hands. Amaze,
 Be sure, and terror, seiz'd the rebel host,
 When coming towards them, so dread they saw
 The bottom of the mountains upward turn'd;
 Till on those cursed engins triple-row 650
 They saw them whelm'd, and all their confidence
 Under the weight of mountains buried deep:
 Themselves invaded next, and on their heads
 Main promontories flung; which in the air
 Came shadowing, and oppress'd whole legions arm'd: 655
 Their armour help'd their harm, crush'd in and bruis'd
 Into their substance pent, which wrought them pain
 Implacable, and many a delorous groan;
 Long struggling underneath, e're they could wind
 Out of such prison, though spirits of purest light: 660
 Purest at first, now gross by sinning grown.
 The rest in imitation to like arms
 Betook them, and the neighb'ring hills up tore:
 So hills amid the air encounter'd hill's,
 Hurl'd to and fro with jaculation dire; 665
 That under ground they fought in dismal shade,
 Infernal noise! war seem'd a civil game
 To this uproar; horrid confusion heap'd
 Upon confusion rose. And now all Heav'n 670
 Had gone to wrack, with ruin overspread,
 Had not th' almighty Father, where he sits
 Shrin'd in his sanctuary of Heav'n secure
 Consulting on the sum of things, foreseen
 This tumult, and permitted all, advis'd:
 That his great purpose he might so fulfil, 675
 To honor his anointed Son aveng'd
 Upon his enemies, and to declare
 All pow'r on him transferr'd: whence to his Son,
 Th' assessor of his throne, he thus began.
 Effulgence of my glory, Son belov'd, 680
 Son

Son in whose face invisible is beheld
 Visibly, what by deity I am;
 And in whose hand what by decree I do,
 Second Omnipotence! two days are past!
 Two days, as we compute the days of Heav'n, 685
 Since Michael and his Pow'rs went forth to tame
 These disobedient: sore hath been their fight,
 As likeliest was, when two such foes met arm'd:
 For to themselves I left them, and thou know'st,
 Equal in their creation they were form'd, 690
 Save what sin hath impair'd, which yet hath wrought
 Insensibly, for, I suspend their doom:
 Whence in perpetual fight they needs must last
 Endless, and no solution will be found:
 War wearied hath perform'd what war can do, 695
 And to disorder'd rage let loose the reins,
 With mountains as with weapons arm'd; which makes
 Wild work in Heav'n, and dangerous to the main.
 Two days are therefore past, the third is thine;
 For thee I have ordain'd it; and thus far 700
 Have suffer'd, that the glory may be thine
 Of ending this great war, since none but thou
 Can end it. Into thee such virtue and grace
 Immense I have transus'd, that all may know
 In Heav'n and Hell thy pow'r above compare: 705
 And this perverse commotion govern'd thus,
 To manifest thee worthiest to be Heir
 Of all things; to be Heir, and to be King
 By sacred unction, thy deserved right.
 Go then thou Mightiest in thy Father's might! 710
 Ascend my chariot, guide the rapid wheels
 That shake Heav'n's basis; bring forth all my war,
 My bow and thunder, my almighty arms
 Gird on, and sword upon thy puissant thigh.
 Pursue these sons of darkness, drive them out 715
 From all Heav'n's bounds into the utter deep:
 There let them learn, as likes them, to despise
 God and Messiah his anointed king.

He

He said, and on his Son with rays direct
Shone full; he all his Father full express'd
Ineffably into his face receiv'd:
And thus the filial Godhead answer'ing spake.

O Father, O supreme of heav'nly Thrones,
First, Highest, Holiest, Best, thou always seek'st
To glorify thy Son, I always thee,
As is most just; this I my glory account,
My exaltation, and my whole delight,
That thou in me well pleas'd, declar'st thy will
Fulfil'd, which to fulfil is all my bliss.
Scepter and pow'r, thy giving, I assume,
And gladlier shall resign, when in the end
Thou shalt be all in all, and I in thee
For ever; and in me all whom thou lov'st:
But whom thou hat'st, I hate, and can put on
Thy terrors, as I put thy mildness on,
Image of thee in all things: and shall soon,
Arm'd with thy might, rid Heav'n of these rebell'd,
To their prepar'd ill mansion driven down,
To chains of darkness, and th' undying worm;
That from thy just obedience could revolt,
Whom to obey is happiness entire,
Then shall thy Saints unmix'd, and from th' impure
Far separate, circling thy holy mount
Unfeigned Hallelujahs to thee sing,
Hymns of high praise, and I among them Chief.

So said, He o'er his sceptre bowing, rose
From the right hand of glory where he sat;
And the third sacred morn began to shine,
Dawning through Heav'n. Forth rush'd with whirlwind
The chariot of Paternal Deity,
Flashing thick flames, wheel within wheel undrawn,
Itself instinct with spirit, but convoy'd
By four Cherubic shapes; four faces each
Had wondrous; as with stars their bodies all
And wings where set with eyes; with eyes the wheels
Of beril, and carcering fires between;

Over

Over their heads a chrystal firmament;
 Where on a saphir throne inlaid with pure
 Amber, and colors of the show'ry arch,
 He in celestial panoply all arm'd 760
 Of radiant Urim, work divinely wrought,
 Ascended: at his right hand Victory
 Sate eagle-wing'd; beside him hung his bow
 And quiver with three bolted thunder stor'd;
 And from about him fierce effusion roll'd 765
 Of smoke and bickering flame and sparkles dire:
 Attended with ten thousand thousand Saints,
 He onward came; far off his coming shone,
 And twenty thousand, I their number heard,
 Chariots of God, half on each hand were seen. 770
 He on the wings of Cherub rode sublime
 On the crystallin sky, in saphir thron'd,
 Illustrious far and wide: but by his own
 First seen; them unexpected joy surpriz'd,
 When the great ensign of Messiah blaz'd, 775
 Aloft by Angels borne, his sign in Heav'n:
 Under whose conduct Michael soon reduc'd
 His army, circumfus'd on either wing,
 Under their Head imbodied all in one.
 Before him pow'r divine his way prepar'd; 780
 At his command th' uprooted hills retir'd
 Each to his place, they heard his voice and went
 Obsequious; Heav'n his wonted face renew'd,
 And with fresh flowrets hill and valley smil'd.

This saw his hapless foes, but stood obdur'd, 785
 And to rebellious fight rallied their Pow'rs,
 Insensate! hope conceiving from despair:
 In heav'nly spirits could such perverseness dwell?
 But, to convince the proud what signs avail,
 Or wonders move th' obdurate to relent? 790
 They harden'd more by what might most reclaim,
 Grieving to see his glory, at the sight
 Took env; and aspiring to his height,
 Stood reembattel'd fierce, by force or fraud

Weenin

Weening to prosper, and at length prevail 795
 Against God and Messiah; or to fall
 In universal ruin last: and now
 To final battel drew, disdain'ing flight,
 Or faint retreat; when the great Son of God
 To all his host on either hand thus spake. 800

Stand still in bright array, ye Saints, here stand
 Ye Angels arm'd, this day from battel rest:
 Faithful hath been your warfare, and of God
 Accepted; fearless in his righteous cause:
 And as ye have receiv'd, so have ye done 805
 Invincibly. But of this cursed crew
 The punishment to other hand belongs:
 Vengeance is his, or whose he sole appoints:
 Number to this day's work is not ordain'd,
 Nor multitude: stand only and behold 810
 God's indignation on these godless pour'd
 By me; not you, but me they have despis'd,
 Yet envied: against me is all their rage,
 Because the Father, to whom in Heav'n supreme
 Kingdom and pow'r and glory appertains, 815
 Hath honor'd me according to his will.
 Therefore to me their doom he hath assign'd:
 That they may have their wish, to try with me
 In battel which the stronger proves; they all,
 Or I alone against them, since by strength 820
 They measure all, of other excellence
 Not emulous, nor care who them excels;
 Nor other strife with them do I vouchsafe,

So spake the Son, and into terror chang'd
 His count'nance, too severe to be beheld! 825
 And full of wrath bent on his enemies.
 At once the four spread out their starry wings,
 With dreadful shade contiguous, and the orbs
 Of his fierce chariot roll'd, as with the sound
 Of torrent floods, or of a numerous host. 830
 He on his impious foes right onward drove,
 Gloomy as night: under his burning wheels

Thee

The stedfast empyrean shook throughout
 All but the throne itself of God. Full soon
 Among them he arriv'd; in his right hand 835
 Grasping ten thousand thunders, which he sent
 Before him, such as in their souls infix'd
 Plagues: they astonish'd, all resistance lost,
 All courage; down their idle weapons dropt:
 O'er shields, and helms and helmed heads he rode 840
 Of Thrones and mighty Seraphim prostrate;
 That wish'd the mountains now might be again
 Thrown on them as a shelter from his ire.
 Nor less on either side tempestuous fell
 His arrows, from the fourfold-visag'd Four, 845
 Distinct with eyes, and from the living wheels
 Distinct alike with multitude of eyes;
 One spirit in them rul'd, and every eye
 Glar'd lightning, and shot forth pernicious fire
 Among th' accurs'd, that wither'd all their strength, 850
 And of their wonted vigor left them drain'd,
 Exhausted, spiritless, afflicted, fall'n.
 Yet half his strength he put not forth, but check'd
 His thunder in mid voly; for he meant
 Not to destroy, but root them out of Heav'n. 855
 The overthrown he rais'd, and as a herd
 Of goats or timorous flock together throng'd,
 Drove them before him thunder-struck, pursued
 With terrors, and with furies, to the bounds
 And chrystal wall of heav'n; which op'ning wide, 860
 Roll'd inward, and a spacious gap disclos'd
 Into the wasteful deep: the monstrous sight
 Struck them with horror backward; but far worse
 Urg'd them behind: headlong themselves they threw
 Down from the verge of Heav'n; eternal wrath 865
 Burn'd after them to the bottomless pit.
 Hell heard th' unsufferable noise, Hell saw
 Heav'n ruining from Heav'n, and would have fled
 Affrighted; but strict fate had cast too deep
 Her dark foundations, and too fast had bound. 870

Nine days they fell; confounded Chaos roar'd,
 And felt tenfold confusion in their fall
 Through his wild anarchy, so huge a rout
 Incumber'd him with ruin! Hell at last
 Yawning receiv'd them whole, and on them clos'd;
 Hell, their fit habitation, fraught with fire
 Unquenchable, the house of woe and pain.
 Disburden'd Heav'n rejoic'd, and soon repair'd
 Her mural breach, returning whence it roll'd
 Sole Victor, from th' expulsion of his foes
 Messiah his triumphal chariot turn'd:
 To meet him all his Saints, who silent stood
 Eye-witnesses of his almighty acts,
 With jubilee advanc'd; and as they went,
 Shaded with branching palm, each order bright
 Sung triumph, and him sung victorious King,
 Son, Heir, and Lord, to him dominion given,
 Worthiest to reign: He celebrated rode
 Triumphant through mid-heav'n; into the courts
 And temple of his mighty Father thron'd
 On high; who into glory him receiv'd,
 Where now he sits at the right hand of bliss.
 Thus, measuring things in Heav'n by things on earth,
 At thy request, and that thou may'st beware
 By what is past, to thee I have reveal'd
 What might have else to human race been hid;
 The discord which beset, and war in heav'n
 Among th' Angelic Powr's, and the deep fall
 Of those too high aspiring, who rebell'd
 With Satan, he who envies now thy state,
 Who now is plotting how he may seduce
 Thee also from obedience, that with him
 Bereav'd of happiness, thou may'st partake
 His punishment, eternal misery;
 Which would be all his solace and revenge,
 As a despite done against the Most High,
 Thee once to gain companion of his woe:
 But listen not to his temptations; warn

Thy

Thy weaker: let it profit thee to have heard,
 By terrible example, the reward 910
 Of disobedience: firm they might have stood,
 Yet fell: Remember, and fear to transgress.

The End of the Sixth Book.

B O O K V I I.

Descend from Heav'n, Urania! by that name
 If rightly thou art call'd, whose voice divine
 Following, above th' Olympian hill I soar,
 Above the flight of Pegaſcan wing,
 The meaning, not the name I call: for thou 885
 Nor of the Muſes nine, nor on the top
 Of old Olympus dwell'ſt; but heav'nly born,
 Before the hills appear'd, or fountain flow'd,
 Thou with eternal *Wiſdom* didſt conſeſe,
Wiſdom thy ſiſter, and with her didſt play 890
 In preſence of th' almighty Father, pleas'd
 With thy celeftial ſong. Up led by thee
 Into the Heav'n of Heav'ns I have preſum'd,
 An earthly gueſt, and drawn empyreal air,
 Thy temp'ring: With like ſafety guided down, 895
 Return me to my native element:
 Left from this flying ſteed unrein'd, as once
 Bellerophon, though from a lower clime,
 Diſmounted, on th' Aleian field I fall,
 Erroneous there to wander, and forlorn. 900
 Half yet remains unſung, but narrower bound
 Within the viſible diurnal ſphere:
 Standing on earth, not rapt above the pole,
 More ſafe I ſing with mortal voice; unchang'd
 To hoarſe or mute, though fall'n on evil days, 905
 On evil days though fall'n, and evil tongues;
 In darkneſs, and with dangers compaſs'd round,
 And ſolitude! Yet not alone, while thou
 Viſit'ſt my ſlumbers nightly; or when morn

Purples the east: still govern thou my song, 30
 Urania, and fit audience find, though few.
 But drive far off the barbarous dissonance
 Of Bacchus and his revellers; the race
 Of that wild rout that tore the Thracian bard
 In Rhodope, where woods and rocks had ears 35
 To rapture, 'till the savage clamor drown'd
 Both harp and voice; nor could the Muse defend
 Her son. So fail not thou, who thee implores:
 For thou art heav'nly, she an empty dream.

Say, Goddesses, what ensued when Raphaël, 40
 The affable Arch-Angel, had forewarn'd
 Adam, by dire example to beware
 Apostasy, by what besel in Heav'n
 To those apostates, lest the like besal
 In Paradise to Adam or his race, 45
 Charg'd not to touch the interdicted tree,
 If they transgress, and slight that sole command:
 So easily obey'd, amid the choice
 Of all tastes else to please their appetite,
 Though wand'ring. — He with his comforted Eve 50
 The story heard attentive, and was fill'd
 With admiration and deep muse, to hear
 Of things so high and strange, things to their thought
 So unimaginable, as hate in Heav'n,
 And war so near the peace of God in bliss, 55
 With such confusion: but the evil soon
 Driv'n back redounded as a flood on those
 From whom it sprung; impossible to mix
 With blessedness. Whence Adam soon repeal'd
 The doubts that in his heart arose: and now 60
 Led on, yet sinless, with desire to know
 What nearer might concern him, how this world
 Of Heav'n and earth conspicuous first began;
 When, and whereof created, for what cause,
 What within Eden or without was done 65
 Before his memory, as one whose drouth
 Yet scarce allay'd, still eyes the current stream,

Whose

30 Whose liquid murmur heard, new thirst exites,
Proceeded thus to ask his heav'nly guest.

Great things, and full of wonder in our ears, 70
Far diff'ring from this world, thou hast reveal'd,
Divine interpreter! by favor sent

35 Down from the empyréan, to forewarn
Us timely of what might else have been our loss,
Unknown; which human knowledge could not reach:
For which to th' infinitely Good we owe 76
Immortal thanks, and his admonishment.

40 Receive with solemn purpose to observe
Immutably his sovereign will, the end
Of what we are. But since thou hast vouchsaf'd 80
Gently, for our instruction, to impart

45 Things above earthly thought, which yet concern'd
Our knowing, as to highest wisdom seem'd,
Deign to descend now lower, and relate
What may no less perhaps avail us known, 85
How first began this Heav'n, which we behold

Distant so high, with moving fires adorn'd
Innumerable; and this which yields or fills
All space, the ambient air wide interfus'd,
Imbracing round this florid earth; what cause, 90
Mov'd the Creator in his holy rest

Through all eternity so late to build
In Chaos; and the work begun, how soon
Absolv'd, if unforbid thou may'st unfold
What we, not to explore the secret ask 95
Of his eternal empire, but the more

To magnify his works, the more we know.
And the great light of day yet wants to run
Much of his race, though steep; suspense in Heav'n,
Held by thy voice, thy potent voice, he hears, 100
And longer will delay to hear thee tell.

65 His generation, and the rising birth
Of nature from the unapparent deep:
Or if the star of ev'ning, and the moon
Haste to thy audience, night with her will bring 105
Silence;

Silence, and sleep, list'ning to thee, will watch;
Or we can bid his absence, 'till thy song
End, and dismiss thee ere the morning shine.

Thus Adam his illustrious guest besought;
And thus the Godlike Angel answer'd mild. 110

This also thy request, with caution ask'd,
Obtain: though to recount almighty works,
What words or tongue of Seraph can suffice,
Or heart of man suffice to comprehend?

Yet what thou can'st attain, which best may serve 115
To glorify the Maker, and infer

Thee also happier, shall not be withheld

Thy hearing: such commission from above

I have receiv'd, to answer thy desire

Of knowledge within bounds: beyond abstain 120

To ask, nor let thine own invention hope

Things not reveal'd, which th' invisible King,

Only omniscient, hath suppress'd in night,

To none communicable in Earth or Heav'n:

Enough is left besides to search and known. 125

But knowledge is as food, and needs no less

Her temperance over appetite, to know

In measure what the mind may well contain;

Oppresses else with surfeit, and soon turns

Wisdom to folly, as nourishment to wind. 130

Know then, that after Lucifer from Heav'n,

So call him, brighter once amidst the host

Of Angels, than that star the stars among,

Fell with his flaming legions through the deep

Into his place, and the great Son return'd 135

Victorious with his Saints, th' omnipotent

Eternal Father from his throne beheld

Their multitude, and to his Son thus spake.

At least our envious foe hath fail'd, who thought

All like himself rebellious, by whose aid 140

This inaccessible high strength, the seat

Of deity supreme, us dispossest,

He trusted to have seist, and into fraud

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Drew many, whom their place knows here no more;
 Yet far the greater part have kept; I see
 Their station; Heav'n, yet populous, retains
 Number sufficient to possess her realms
 Though wide; and this high temple to frequent
 With ministeries due and solemn rites,
 But lest his heart exalt him in the harm
 Already done, to have dispeopled Heav'n,
 My damage fondly deem'd, I can repair
 That detriment, if such it be, to lose
 Self-lost, and in a moment will create
 Another world; out of one man a race
 Of men innumerable, there to dwell,
 Not here: 'till by degrees of merit rais'd
 They open to themselves at length the way
 Up hither; under long obedience try'd,
 And Earth be chang'd to Heav'n, and Heav'n to Earth,
 One kingdom, joy and union without end.
 Mean while inhabit lax, ye pow'rs of Heav'n!
 And thou my Word, begotten Son! by thee
 This I perform, speak thou, and be it done.
 My overshadowing Spirit and might with thee
 I send along: ride forth, and bid the deep
 Within appointed bounds be Heav'n and Earth:
 Boundless the deep, because I am who fill
 Infinitude, nor vacuous the space.
 Though I, uncircumscrib'd myself, retire
 And put not forth my goodness which is free
 To act or not; necessity and change
 Approach not me, and what I will is fate.
 So spake th' Almighty, and to what he spake
 His Word, the filial Godhead, gave effect.
 Immediate are the acts of God, more swift
 Than time or motion; but to human ears
 Cannot without process of speech be told,
 So told, as earthly notion can receive.
 Great triumph and rejoicing was in Heav'n,
 When such was heard declar'd th' Almighty's will:

Glory they sung to the most High! good will
 To future men, and in their dwellings peace:
 Glory to him! whose just avenging ire
 Had driven out th' ungodly from his sight, 185
 And th' habitations of the just: to him
 Glory and praise, whose wisdom had ordain'd
 Good out of evil to create; instead
 Of spirits malign a better race to bring
 Into their vacant room, and thence diffuse 190
 His good to worlds and ages infinite.

So sang the Hierarchies. Mean while the Son
 On his great expedition now appear'd,
 Girt with omnipotence, with radiance crown'd
 Of majesty divine: sapience and love 195
 Immense, and all his Father in him shone.
 About his chariot numberless were pour'd
 Cherub and Seraph, Potentates and Thrones,
 And Virtues: winged spirits, and chariots wing'd
 From th' armory of God, where stand of old 200
 Myriads between two brazen mountains lodg'd
 Against a solemn day, harness'd at hand,
 Celestial equipage! and now came forth
 Spontaneous, for within them spirit liv'd.

Attendant on their Lord: Heav'n open'd wide 205
 Her ever during gates, harmonious sound
 On golden hinges moving, to let forth
 The King of Glory in his pow'rful Word,
 And Spirit coming to create new worlds.
 On heav'nly ground they stood, and from the shore 210
 They view'd the vast immeasurable Abyss,
 Outrageous as a sea, dark, wasteful, wild;
 Up from the bottom turn'd by furious winds
 And surging waves, as mountains, to assault
 Heav'n's height, and with the center mix the pole. 215

Silence, ye troubled waves, and thou deep, peace!
 Said then th' omniscient Word, your discord end: —
 Nor stay'd, but on the wings of Cherubim
 Uplifted, in paternal glory rode

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Far into Chaos; and the world unborn; 220
 For Chaos heard his voice. Him all his train
 Follow'd in bright procession, to behold
 Creation, and the wonders of his might.
 Then staid the fervid wheels, and in his hand
 He took the golden compasses, prepar'd 225
 In God's eternal store, to circumscribe
 This Universe, and all created things.

One foot he center'd, and the other turn'd
 Round through the vast profundity obscure;
 And said, thus far extend, thus far thy bounds, 230
 This be thy just circumference, o World!

Thus God the heav'n created, thus the earth;
 Matter uniform'd and void! Darkness profound
 Cover'd th' abyss, but on the watry calm
 His brooding wings the Spirit of God outspread, 235
 And vital virtue infus'd, and vital warmth
 Throughout the fluid mass; but downward purg'd
 The black tartareous cold infernal dregs,
 Adverse to life: then founded, then conglob'd
 Like things to like; the rest to several place 240
 Disparted, and between spun out the air;
 And earth self balanc'd on her centre hung.

Let there be light! said God; and forthwith light
 Ethereal, first of things, quintessence pure
 Sprung from the deep: and from her native east, 245
 To journey through the aery gloom began,
 Spher'd in a radiant cloud; for yet the sun
 Was not, she in a cloudy tabernacle
 Sojourn'd the while. God saw the light was good; 250
 And light from darkness by the hemisphere
 Divided: light the day, and darkness night
 He nam'd. Thus was the first day ev'n and morn:
 Nor past uncelebrated, nor unsung
 By the celestial quires, when orient light
 Exhaling first from darkness they beheld; 255
 Birth-day of Heav'n and Earth! with joy and shout
 The hollow universal orb they fill'd;

And touch'd their golden harps, and hymning prais'd
God and his works; Creator him they sung,
Both when first ev'ning was, and when first morn. 260.

Again, God said; let there be firmament

Amid the waters, and let it divide

The waters from the waters! And God made

The firmament expanse of liquid, pure,

Transparent, elemental air, diffus'd 265

In circuit to the uttermost convex

Of this great round: partition firm and sure,

The waters underneath from those above

Dividing: for as earth, so he the world

Built on circumfluous waters calm, in wide 270

Chrystallin ocean, and the loud misrule

Of Chaos far remov'd; lest fierce extremes

Contiguous might distemper the whole frame:

And Heav'n he nam'd the firmament: so ev'n

And morning chorus sung the second day. 275

The earth was form'd, but in the womb as yet

Of waters, embryo immature, involv'd,

Appear'd not: over all the face of earth

Main ocean flow'd; not idle, but with warm

Prolific humor soft'ning all her globe, 280

Fermented the great mother to conceive,

Satiate with genial moisture, when God said,

Be gather'd now ye waters under Heav'n

Into one place, and let dry land appear! 285

Immediately the mountains huge appear

Emergent, and their broad bare backs upheave

Into the clouds, their tops ascend the sky.

So high as heav'd the tumid hills, so low

Down sunk a hollow bottom, broad and deep,

Capacious bed of waters: Thither they 290

Hasted with glad precipitance, uproll'd,

As drops on dust conglobing from the dry:

Past rise in crystal wall, or ridge direct,

For haste; such sight the great command impress'd

On the swift floods: as armies at the call 295

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Of trumpet, for of armies thou hast heard,
 Troop to their standard; so the wat'ry throng,
 Wave rolling after wave, where way they found,
 If steep, with torrent rapture, if through plain,
 Soft-ebbing; nor withstood them rock or hill; 300
 But they, or under ground, or circuit wide
 With serpent error wand'ring, found their way,
 And on the washy ooze deep channels wore;
 Easy, ere God had bid the ground be dry,
 All but within those banks, where rivers now 305
 Stream, and perpetual draw their humid train.
 The dry land, earth, and the great receptacle
 Of congregated waters, he call'd seas;
 And saw that it was good: and said, let th' earth
 Puth forth the verdant grass; herb yielding feed, 310
 And fruit-tree yielding fruit after her kind,
 Whose seed is in herself upon the earth! —
 He scarce had said, when the bare earth, 'till then
 Desert and bare, unsightly, unadorn'd,
 Brought forth the tender grass, whose verdure clad 315
 Her universal face with pleasant green,
 Then herbs of every leaf, that sudden flow'r'd
 Op'ning their various colors, and made gay
 Her bosom smelling sweet. And these scarce blown,
 Forth flourish'd thick the clust'ring vine, forth crept 320
 The smelling gourd, up stood the corny reed,
 Embattl'd in her field; and th' humble shrub,
 And bush, with frizl'd hair implicit. Last,
 Rose, as in dance, the stately trees, and spread 324
 Their branches hung with copious fruit; or gemm'd
 Their blossoms: with high woods the hills were crown'd;
 With tufts the vallies, and each fountain side
 With borders long the rivers; that earth now 330
 Seem'd like to Heav'n; a seat where Gods might dwell,
 Or wander with delight, and love to haunt
 Her sacred shades: though God had yet not rain'd
 Upon the earth, and man to till the ground.
 None was: but from the earth a dewy mist

Went

Went up, and water'd all the ground, and each
Plant of the field; which, ere it was in th' earth, 335
God made, and ev'ry herb, before it grew
On the green stem: God saw that it was good,
So Ev'n and Morn recorded the third Day.

Again th' Almighty spake: Let there be lights
High in th' expanse of Heaven, to divide 340
The day from night: and let them be for signs,
For seasons, and for days, and circling years,
And let them be for lights, as I ordain
Their office in the firmament of Heav'n,
To give light on the earth! — and it was so: 345
And God made two great lights, great for their use
To man, the greater to have rule by day,
The less by night altern: and made the stars,
And set them in the firmament of Heav'n,
T' illuminate the earth, and rule the day; 350
In their vicissitude, and rule the night,
And light from darkness to divide. God saw,
Surveying his great work, that it was good:
For of celestial bodies first the Sun
A mighty sphere! he fram'd; unlightsome first, 355
Tho' of ethereal mold; then form'd the moon,
Globose; and ev'ry magnitude of stars;
And sow'd with stars the Heav'n, thick as a field.
Of light by far the greater part he took,
Transplanted from her cloudy shrine, and plac'd 360
In the Sun's orb, made porous to receive
And drink the liquid light, firm to retain
Her gather'd beams, great palace now of light:
Hither, as to their fountain, other stars
Repairing, in their golden urns draw light, 365
And hence the morning planet gilds her horns:
By tincture, or reflection, they augment
Their small peculiar, though from human sight
So far remote, with diminution seen.
First in his east the glorious lamp was seen, 370
Regent of day; and all th' horizon round

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Invested with bright rays, jocond to run
 335 His longitude through Heav'n's high road: the gray
 Dawn, and the Pleiades before him danc'd;
 Shedding sweet influence. Less bright the moon;
 But opposite in level'd west was set
 340 His mirror, with full face borrowing her light
 From him, for other light she needed none.
 In that aspect: and still that distance keeps
 'Till night; then in the east her turn she shines,
 345 Revolv'd on Heav'n's great axle, and her reign
 With thousand lesser lights individual holds,
 With thousand thousand stars, that then appear'd
 Spangling the hemisphere; then first adorn'd
 With the bright luminaries, that set and rose,
 350 Glad ev'ning and glad morn' crown'd the fourth day.

And God said, let the waters generate
 355 Reptil with spawn abundant, living soul!
 And let fowl fly above the earth, with wings
 Display'd on th' open firmament of Heav'n!
 And God created the great whales, and each
 360 Soul living; each that crept, which plenteously
 The waters generated by their kinds!
 And every bird of wing after his kind;
 And saw that it was good, and blest'd them, saying,
 365 Be fruitful, multiply, and in the seas
 And lakes, and running streams, the waters fill;
 And let the fowl be multiply'd on th' earth.
 Forthwith the founts, and seas, each creek and bay
 With fry innumerable swarm and shoals
 370 Of fish, that with their fins and shining scales
 Glide under the green wave in sculls, that oft
 Bank the mid sea: part single, or with mate,
 Graze the sea-weed their pasture, and thro' groves
 Of coral stray; or, sporting with quick glance,
 375 Shew to the Sun their wav'd coats, dropt with gold;
 Or, in their pearly shells at ease, attend
 Moist nutriment, or under rocks their food,
 In jointed armour watch; on smooth the Seal

And

And bended Dolphins play: part huge of bulk 410
 Wallowing unwieldy, enormous in their gate
 Tempest the ocean: there Leviathan,
 Hugest of living creatures, on the deep
 Stretch'd like a promontory sleeps or swims
 And seems a moving land, and at his gills 415
 Draws in, and at his trunk spouts out a sea.
 Mean while the tepid caves, and fens and shores,
 Their brood as numerous hatch from th'egg, that soon
 Bursting with kindly rupture forth disclos'd
 Their callow young; but feather'd soon and fledge 420
 They summ'd their pens, and soaring th' air sublime,
 With clang despis'd the ground, under a cloud
 In prospect: there the eagle and the stork,
 On cliffs and cedar tops their eyries build;
 Part loosely wing the region! part, more wise 425
 In common, rang'd in figure wedge their way,
 Intelligent of seasons, and set forth
 Their aery caravan, high over seas
 Flying, and over lands with mutual wing
 Easing their flight; so steers the prudent crane 430
 Her annual voyage, born on winds; the air
 Floats, as they pass, fann'd with unnumber'd plumes.
 From branch to branch the smaller birds with song
 Solac'd the woods, and spread their painted wings
 'Till ev'n; nor then, the solemn nightingale 435
 Ceas'd warbling, but all night tun'd her soft lays.
 Others on silver lakes and rivers bath'd
 Their downy breast; the swan with arched neck
 Between her white wings mantling proudly, rows
 Her state with oary feet: yet oft they quit 440
 The dank, and rising on stiff pennons, tower
 The mid aerial sky. Others on ground
 Walk'd firm; the crested cock, whose clarion sounds
 The silent hours; and th' other, whose gay train
 Adorns him, color'd with the florid hue 445
 Of rainbows and starry eyes. The waters thus
 With fish replenish'd, and the air with fowl,

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Ev'ning and morn solemniz'd the fifth day,

The sixth, and of creation last arose

With ev'ning harps and matin; when God said, 459

Let th' earth bring forth soul living in her kind,

Cattel and creeping things, and beast of th' earth

Each in their kind. — The earth obey'd; and straight

Op'ning her fertile womb, teem'd at a birth

Innumerable living creatures, perfect forms, 455

Limb'd and full grown. Out of the ground up rose

As from his lair the wild beast where he wons

In forest wild, in thicket, brake or den:

Among the trees in pairs they rose, they walk'd;

The cattel in the fields, and meadows green: 460

Those rare and solitary, these in flocks

Pasturing at once, and in broad herds upspring.

The grassy clods now calv'd, now half appear'd

The tawny lion, pawing to get free 464

His hinder parts; then springs as broke from ponds,

And rampant shakes his printed mane; the ounce,

The libbard, and the tiger, as the mole

Rising, the crumb'd earth above them threw

In hillocks: the swift stag from under ground

Bore up his branching head: farce from his mould 470

Behemoth, biggest born of earth, upheav'd

His vastness: flec'd the flock, and pleating rose,

As plants: ambiguous between sea and land

The river-horse and scaly crocodile.

At once came forth whatever creeps the ground, 475

Insect or worm: those wav'd their limber fans;

For wings; and smallest lineaments exact

In all the liveries deck'd of summers pride,

With spots of gold, and purple, azure and green:

These, as a line, their long dimension drew, 480

Streaking the ground with sinuous trace: not all

Minims of nature, some of serpent kind,

Wondrous in length and corpulence, involv'd

Their snaky folds, and added wings. First crept

The parsimonious emmet, provident 485

Of

v'ning

Of future, in small room large heart inclos'd,
 Pattern of just equality perhaps
 Hereafter, joined in her popular tribes
 Of commonalty: swarming next, appear'd
 The female bee, that feeds her husband drone 490
 Deliciously, and builds her waxen cells
 With honey stor'd. The rest are numberless,
 And thou their natures know'st, and gav'st them names,
 Needleless to thee repeated: nor unknown
 The serpent, subtlest beast of all the field, 495
 Of huge extent sometimes, with brazen eyes
 And hairy mane terrific, though to thee
 Not noxious, but obedient at thy call.

Now heav'n in all her glory shone, and roll'd
 Her motions, as the great first Mover's hand 500
 First wheel'd their course; earth in her rich attire
 Consummate lovely smil'd; air, water, earth,
 By fowl, fish, beast, was flow'n, was swum, was walk'd
 Frequent; and of the sixth day yet remain'd.
 There wanted yet the master work, the end 505
 Of all yet done; a creature, who not prone,
 And brute as other creatures, but indued
 With sanctity of reason, might erect
 His stature, and upright with front serene
 Govern the rest, self knowing; and from thence 510
 Magnanimous to correspond with Heav'n;
 But grateful to acknowledge whence his good
 Descends: thither with heart, and voice, and eyes
 Directed in devotion, to adore
 And worship God supreme, who made him chief 515
 Of all his works: therefore th' Omnipotent
 Eternal Father, for where is not he
 Present? thus to his Son audibly spake.

Let us make now Man in our image, Man
 In our similitude, and let them rule 520
 Over the fish, and fowl of sea and air,
 Beast of the field, and over all the earth,
 And every creeping thing that creeps the ground!

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This said, he form'd thee, Adam; thee O Man!
 Dust of the ground; and in thy nostrils breath'd 525
 The breath of life: in his own image he
 Created thee, in the image of God
 Express, and thou becam'st a living soul.
 Male he created thee, but thy consort
 Female, for race: then bless'd mankind, and said, 530
 Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth,
 Subdue it, and throughout dominion hold
 Over fish of the sea, and fowl of th' air,
 And ev'ry living thing that moves on th' earth,
 Wherever thus created, for no place 535
 Is yet distinct by name, thence, as thou know'st,
 He brought thee into this delicious grove,
 This garden; planted with the trees of God;
 Delectable both to behold and taste:
 And freely all their pleasant fruit for food 540
 Gave thee, all sorts are here that all th' earth yields,
 Variety without end! but of the tree,
 Which tasted works knowledge of good and evil,
 Thou may'st not: in the day thou eat'st, thou dy'st:
 Death is the penalty impos'd beware! 545
 And govern well thy appetite, lest Sin
 Surprise thee, and her black attendant Death.
 Here finish'd He, and all that he had made
 View'd, and behold! all was entirely good;
 So ev'n and morn accomplish'd the sixth day: 550
 Yet not 'till the Creator from his work
 Desisting, though unwearied, up return'd;
 Up to the Heav'n of Heav'n's, his high abode,
 Thence to behold this new created world,
 Th' addition of his empire, how it show'd 555
 In prospect from his throne, how good, how fair,
 Answering his great idea: Up he rode
 Follow'd with acclamation, and the sound
 Symphonious of ten thousand harps that tun'd.
 Angelic harmonies: the earth, the air 560
 Refounded, thou remember'st, for thou heardest,
 L The

The Heav'n's and all the constellations rung:
 The planets in their station list'ning stood,
 While the bright pomp ascended jubilant.
 Open, ye everlasting gates, they sung, 565
 Open, ye Heav'n's, your living doors; let in
 The great Creator, from his work return'd
 Magnificent, his six days work, a World!
 Open, and henceforth oft; for God will deign
 To visit oft the dwellings of just men, 570
 Delighted; and with frequent intercourse
 Thither will send his winged messengers,
 On errands of supernal grace. So sung
 The glorious train ascending: He through Heav'n,
 That open'd wide her blazing portals, led, 575
 To God's eternal house direct the way;
 A broad and ample road, whose dust is gold
 And pavement stars, as stars to thee appear
 Seen in the galaxy, that milky way
 Which nightly, as a circling zone, thou seest 580
 Powder'd with stars. And now on earth the seventh
 Eyr'ning arose in Eden, for the sun
 Was set, and twilight from the east came on,
 Forerunning night; when, at the holy mount
 Of Heav'n's high-seated top, th' imperial throne 585
 Of Godhead, fix'd for ever firm and sure,
 The filial Pow'r arriv'd, and sat him dow'n
 With his great Father: for he also went
 Invisible, yet staid, such privilege
 Hath Omnipresence, and the work ordain'd, 590
 Author and end of all things; and from work
 Now resting, blest'd and hallow'd the sev'nth day,
 As resting on that day from all his work:
 But not in silence holy kept; the harp
 Had work and rested not, the solemn pipe, 595
 And dulcimer, all organs of sweet stop,
 All sounds on fret by string, or golden wire,
 Temper'd soft tunings, intermix'd with voice
 Choral, or unison: of incense clouds,

Fuming

Fuming from golden censers, hid the mount;
Creation, and the six days afts, they sung.

Great are thy works, Jehovah, infinite
Thy pow'r! what thought can measure thee, or tongue
Relate thee? Greater now in thy return
Than from the giant Angels: Thee that day
Thy thunders magnify'd; but to create
Is greater, than created to destroy.

Who can impair thee, mighty King! or bound
Thy empire? Easily the proud attempt
Of spirits apostate, and their counsels vain,
Thou hast repell'd; while impiously they thought

Thee to diminish, and from thee withdraw
The number of thy worshippers. Who seeks
To lessen thee, against his purpose serves
To manifest the more thy might: his evil
Thou usest, and from thence creat'st more good.

Witness this new-made world, another Heav'n!
From Heaven gate not far, founded in view
On the clear hyaline, the glassy sea;

Of amplitude almost immense, with stars
Numerous, and ev'ry star perhaps a world
Of destin'd habitation; but thou know'st

Their seasons: among these the seat of men,
Earth, with her nether ocean circumfus'd,
Their pleasant dwelling-place. Thrice happy men!
And sons of men! whom God hath thus advanc'd.

Created in his image, there to dwell
And worship him; and in reward to rule
Over his works, on earth, in sea, or air;
And multiply a race of worshippers

Holy and just: thrice happy if they know
Their happiness, and persevere upright!

So sung they, and the empyrean rung
With hallelujahs: Thus was Sabbath kept,
And thy request think now fulfill'd, that ask'd
How first this world and face of things began,
And what before thy memory was done

From the beginning, that posterity
Inform'd by thee might know. If else thou seek'st
Ought, not surpassing human measure, say. 640

The End of the Seventh Book.

B O O K V I I I.

The Angel ended, and in Adam's ear
So charming left his voice, that he a while
Thought him still speaking, still stood fix'd to hear:
Then, as new wak'd, thus gratefully reply'd.
What thanks sufficient, or what recompense 5
Equal, have I to render thee, divine
Historian? who thus largely hast allay'd
The thirst I had of knowledge, and vouchsaf'd
This friendly condescension to relate
Things, else by me unsearchable; now heard 10
With wonder, but delight; and, as is due,
With glory attributed to the high
Creator. Something yet of doubt remains,
Which only thy solution can resolve.
When I behold this goodly frame, this world 15
Of Heav'n and earth consisting; and compute
Their magnitudes; this earth a spot, a grain,
An atom, with the firmament compar'd,
And all her number'd stars; that seem to roll
Spaces incomprehensible, for such 20
Their distance argues, and their swift return
Diurnal, merely to officiate light
Round this opacous earth, this punctual spot,
One day and night; in all their vast survey
Useless besides: reasoning I oft admire, 25
How Nature, wise and frugal, could commit
Such disproportions; with superfluous hand,
So many nobler bodies to create,
Greater so manifold to this one use,
For ought appears, and on their orbs impose 30
Such

Such restless revolution day by day
 Repeated, while the sedentary earth,
 That better might with far less compass move,
 Serv'd by more noble than herself, attains
 Her end without least motion; and receives, 35
 As tribute, such a sumless journey brought
 Of incorporeal speed, her warmth and ligh;
 Speed, to describe whose swiftness number fails.

So spake our sire, and by his count'nance seem'd
 Ent'ring on studious thoughts abstruse; which Eve 40
 Perceiving, where she sat retir'd in sight,
 With lowliness majestic from her seat,
 And grace, that won who saw to wish her stay;
 Rose, and went forth among her fruits and flow'rs,
 To visit how they prosper'd, but and bloom, 45
 Her nursery: they at her coming sprung,
 And touch'd by her fair tendance gladder grew,
 Yet went she not, as not with such discourse
 Delighted, or not capable her ear
 Of what was high: such pleasure she reserv'd, 50
 Adam relating, the sole auditress:
 Her husband the relater she preferr'd
 Before the Angel, and of him to ask
 Chose rather: he, she knew, would intermix
 Grateful digressions, and solve high dispute 55
 With conjugal caresses: from his lip
 Not words alone pleas'd her. O when meet now
 Such pairs, in love and mutual honor join'd?
 With Goddess-like demeanour forth she went;
 Not unattended! for on her, as Queen, 60
 A pomp of winning Graces waited still,
 And from about her shot darts of desire
 Into all eyes, to wish her still in sight.
 And Raphael now, to Adam's doubt propos'd,
 Benevolent and facil thus reply'd. 65

To ask or search I blame thee not, for Heav'n
 Is as the book of God before thee set,
 Wherein to read his wondrous works, and learn

His seasons, hours, or days, or months, or years:
 This to attain, whether Heav'n move or Earth, 70
 Imports not, if thou reckon right; the rest
 From man or angel, the great Architect
 Did wisely to conceal; and not divulge
 His secrets to be scann'd by them who ought
 Rather admire. Or, if they list to try 75
 Conjecture, he his fabric of the Heav'n's
 Hath left to their disputes, perhaps to move
 His laughter at their quaint opinions wide
 Hereafter; when they come to model Heav'n,
 And calculate the stars, how they will wield 80
 The mighty frame; how build, unbuild, contrive
 To save appearances; how gird the sphere
 With centric and eccentric scrib'd o'er,
 Cycle and epicycle, orb in orb.
 Already by thy reasoning this I guess, 85
 Who art to lead thy offspring, and supposest,
 That bodies bright and greater should not serve
 The less not bright, nor Heav'n such journeys run,
 Earth sitting still, when she alone receives
 The benefit. Consider first, that great 90
 Or bright infer's not excellence: the earth
 Though, in comparison of Heav'n, so small,
 Nor glistening, may of solid good contain
 More plenty than the Sun, that barren shines;
 Whose virtue on itself works no effect, 95
 But in the fruitful earth: there first receiv'd
 His beams, unactive else; their vigor find.
 Yet not to earth are those bright luminaries
 Officious, but to thee, earth's habitant.
 And for the Heav'n's wide circuit, let it speak 100
 The Maker's high magnificence; who built
 So spacious, and his line stretch'd out so far;
 That man may know he dwells not in his own;
 An edifice too large for him to fill,
 Lodg'd in a small partition; and the rest 105
 Ordain'd for uses to his Lord best known.

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The swiftness of those circles attribute,
 Though numberless, to his omnipotence,
 That to corporeal substances could add
 Spread all most spiritual: me thou think'st not slow, 110
 Who since the morning-hour set out from Heav'n,
 Where God resid's; and ere mid-day arriv'd
 In Eden: distance inexpressible
 By numbers that have name! but this I urge,
 Admitting motion in the Heav'n's; to shew 115
 Invalid, that which thee to doubt it mov'd:
 Not that I so affirm, though so it seem
 To thee who hast thy dwelling here on earth.
 God, to remove his ways from human sense,
 Plac'd heav'n from earth so far, that earthly sight, 120
 If it presume, might err in things too high,
 And no advantage gain. What if the Sun
 Be center to the world; and other stars
 By his attractive virtue, and their own,
 Incited, dance about him various rounds? 125
 Their wand'ring course now high, now low, then hid,
 Progressive, retrograde, or standing still,
 In fix thou seest: and what if sev'nth to these
 The planet earth, so steadfast though she seem,
 Insensibly three different motions move? 130
 Which else to several spheres thou must ascribe,
 Mov'd contrary with thwart obliquities,
 Or save the sun his labor, and that swift
 Nocturnal and diurnal rhomb suppos'd,
 Invisible else above all stars, the wheel 135
 Of day and night: which needs not thy belief,
 If earth industrious of herself, fetch day
 Travelling east; and with her part averse
 From the sun's beam meet night; her other part
 Still luminous by his ray. What if that light, 140
 Sent from her through the wide transpicuous air,
 To the terrestrial moon be as a star,
 Inlightning her by day, as she by night
 This earth, reciprocal? if land be there,

Fields and inhabitants: her spots thou seest 145
 As clouds, and clouds may rain, and rain produce
 Fruits in her soften'd soil, for some to eat
 Allotted there: and other Suns perhaps
 With their attendant moons thou wilt descry,
 Communicating male and female light, 150
 Which two great sexes animate the world,
 Stor'd in each orb, perhaps, with some that live.
 For such vast room in nature unpossess'd
 By living soul, desert and desolate,
 Only to shine, yet scarce to contribute 155
 Each orb a glimpse of light, convey'd so far
 Down to this habitable, which returns
 Light back to them, is obvious to dispute.
 But whether thus these things, or whether not,
 Whether the sun, predominant in heav'n, 160
 Rise on the earth, or earth rise on the sun;
 He, from the east his flaming road begin;
 Or she, from west her silent course advance,
 With inoffensive pace, that spinning sleeps
 On her soft axle, while she paces ev'n, 165
 And bears thee soft with the smooth air along,
 Sollicit not thy thoughts with matters hid,
 Leave them to God above, him serve and fear.
 Of other creatures, as him pleases best,
 Where-ever plac'd, let him dispose: joy thou 170
 In what he gives to thee, this paradise
 And thy fair Eve: Heav'n is for thee too high
 To know what passes there: be lowly wise:
 Think only what concernsthee and thy being;
 Dream not of other worlds, what creatures there 175
 Live, in what state, condition or degree;
 Contented that thus far hath been reveal'd,
 Not of earth only, but of highest Heav'n.
 To whom thus Adam, clear'd of doubt, reply'd.
 How fully hast thou satisfy'd me, pure 180
 Intelligence of Heav'n, Angel serene!
 And freed from intricacies taught to live,

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145 The easiest way; nor with perplexing thoughts
 To interrupt the sweet of life, from which
 God hath bid dwell far off all anxious cares, 188
 And not molest us, unless we ourselves
 Seek them with wand'ring thoughts, and notions vain.
 150 But apt the mind or fancy is to rove
 Uncheck'd, and of her roving is no end:
 'Till warn'd, or by experience taught, she learn, 190
 That not to know at large of things remote
 From use, obscure and subtle, but to know
 155 That which before us lies in daily life,
 Is the prime wisdom: what is more, is fume,
 Or emptiness, or fond impertinence; 195
 And renders us in things that most concern
 Unpractis'd, unprepar'd, and still to seek.
 160 Therefore from this high pitch let us descend
 A lower flight, and speak of things at hand
 Useful, whence haply mention may arise 200
 Of something not unseasonable to ask,
 By suff'rance, and thy wonted favor deign'd,
 165 Thee I have heard relating what was done
 Ere my remembrance: now, hear me relate
 My story, which perhaps thou hast not heard: 205
 And day is yet not spent, 'till then thou seest
 How subtly to detain thee I devise,
 170 Inviting thee to hear while I relate,
 Fond, were it not in hope of thy reply:
 For while I sit with thee, I seem in Heav'n, 210
 And sweeter thy discourse is to my ear
 Than fruits of Palm-tree, pleasantest to thirst
 And hunger both, from labor, at the hour
 Of sweet repast: they satiate, and soon fill
 175 Tho' pleasant; but thy words with grace divine 215
 Imbued, bring to their sweetness no satiety.
 Tho' whom thus Raphael answer'd heav'nly meek,
 Nor are thy lips ungraceful, Sire of men!
 Nor tongue ineloquent: for God on thee
 Abundantly his gifts hath also pour'd, 220

Inward and outward both, his image fair:
 Speaking or mute all comeliness and grace
 Attends thee, and each word, each motion, forms:
 Nor less think we in Heav'n of thee on Earth,
 Than of our fellow-servant; and inquire 225
 Gladly into the ways of God with Man:
 For God we see hath honor'd thee, and set
 On Man his equal love. Say therefore on;
 For I that day was absent, as betel,
 Bound on a voyage uncouth and obscure, 230
 Far on excursion toward the gates of hell,
 Squar'd in full legion, such command we had,
 To see that none thence issu'd forth a spy,
 Or enemy, while God was in his work.
 Lest he, incens'd at such eruption bold, 235
 Destruction with creation might have mix'd.
 Not that they durst without his leave attempt;
 But us he sends upon his high behests
 For state, as Sov'reign King; and to inure
 Our prompt obedience. Fast we found, fast shut 240
 The dismal gates, and parricado'd strong!
 But long e're our approaching heard within
 Noise, other than the sound of dance or song!
 Torment, and loud lament, and furious rage.
 Glad we return'd up to the coast of light 245
 Ere Sabbath ev'ning: so we had in charge.
 But thy relation now! for I attend,
 Pleas'd with thy words no less than thou with mine.

So spake the Godlike Pow'r, and thus our fire.
 For Man to tell how human life began 250
 Is hard; for who himself beginning knew?
 Desire with thee still longer to converse
 Induc'd me. — As new wak'd from soundest sleep,
 Soft on the flow'ry herb I found me laid,
 In balmy sweat; which with his beams the sun 255
 Soon dry'd, and on the reaking moisture fed.
 Straight toward heav'n my wond'ring eyes I turn'd,
 And gaz'd a while the ample sky; 'till rais'd

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By quick instinctive motion up I sprung,
 As thitherward endeavoring, and upright
 Stood on my feet. About me round I saw
 Hill, dale, and shady woods; and sunny plains,
 And liquid lapse of murm'ring streams: by these,
 Creatures that liv'd, and mov'd, and walk'd, or flew;
 Birds on the branches warbling; all things smil'd:
 With fragrance, and with joy, my heart o'erflow'd.
 Myself I then perus'd, and limb by limb
 Survey'd; and sometimes went, and sometimes ran
 With supple joints, as lively vigor led.
 But who I was, or where, or from what cause;
 Knew not: to speak I try'd, and forthwith spake;
 My tongue obey'd, and readily could name
 Whate'er I saw. Thou Sun, said I, fair light!
 And thou inlighten'd Earth, so fresh and gay!
 Ye hills and dales, ye rivers, woods and plains!
 And ye that live and move, fair creatures! tell,
 Tell, if ye saw, how came I thus, how here?
 Not of myself ——— By some great Maker then,
 In goodness and in pow'r praecminent.
 Tell me, how may I know him, how adore,
 From whom I have that thus I move and live,
 And feel that I am happier than I know.
 While thus I call'd, and stray'd I knew not whither,
 From where I first drew air, and first beheld
 This happy light; when answer none return'd,
 On a green shady bank profuse of flow'rs
 Pensive I sat me down. There gentle sleep
 First found me, and with soft oppression seiz'd
 My droused sense, untroubld, though I thought
 I then was passing to my former state
 Insensible, and forthwith to dissolve:
 When suddenly stood at my head a dream,
 Whose inward apparition gently mov'd
 My fancy, to believe I yet had being,
 And liv'd. One came, methought, of shape divine,
 And said, "Thy mansion wants thee, Adam, rise,
"First

"First man, of men innumerable ordain'd
 "First Father! call'd by thee I come thy guide
 "To the garden of bliss, thy seat prepar'd"
 So saying, by the hand he took me rais'd; 300
 And over fields and waters, as in air,
 Smood sliding without step, last led me up
 A woody mountain, whose high top was plain,
 A circuit wide, inclos'd, with goodliest trees
 Planted, with walks, and bow'rs; that what I saw 305
 Of earth before scarce pleasant seem'd. Each tree
 Loaden with fairest fruit, that hung to th' eye
 Tempting, stir'd in me sudden appetite
 To pluck and eat; whereat I wak'd, and found
 Before mine eyes all real, as the dream 310
 Had lively shadow'd. Here had new begun
 My wand'ring, had not he, who was my guide
 Up hither, from among the trees appear'd,
 Presence divine! rejoicing, but with awe,
 In adoration at his feet I fell 315
 Submits: he rear'd me, and "whom thou sought'st I am,
 Said mildly, "Author of all this thou seest
 "Above, or round about thee, or beneath.
 "This Paradise I give thee, count it thine
 "To till and keep, and of the fruit to eat: 320
 "Of every tree that in the garden grows
 "Eat freely with glad heart; fear here no dearth;
 "But of the tree whose operation brings
 "Knowledge of good and ill, which I have set
 "The pledge of thy obedience and thy faith, 325
 "Amid the garden by the Tree of Life,
 "Remember what I warn thee! shun to taste,
 "And shun the bitter consequence; for know,
 "The day thou eat'st thereof, my sole command
 "Transgress'd, inevitably thou shalt dye; 330
 "From that day mortal: and this happy state
 "Shalt lose, expell'd from hence into a world
 "Of woe and sorrow." — Sternly he pronounc'd
 The rigid interdiction, which reseunds

Yet

Yet dreadful in mine ear, though in my choice 335
Not to incur: but soon his clear aspect
Return'd, and gracious purpose thus renew'd.
"Not only these fair bounds, but all the earth
"To thee and to thy race I give; as Lords
"Possess it, and all things that therein live, 340
"Or live in sea, or air, beast, fish, and fowl;
"In sign whereof, each bird, and beast, behold
"After their kinds: I bring them to receive
"From thee their names, and pay thee fealty
"With low subjection: understand the same 345
"Of fish within their watry residence,
"Not higher summon'd, since they cannot change
"Their element to draw the thinner air,"
As thus her spake, each bird and beast behold
Approaching, two and two; these, cowering low 350
With blandishment; each bird stoop'd on his wing.
I nam'd them, as they pass'd, and understood
Their nature, with such knowledge God indu'd
My sudden apprehension! but in these
I found not what methought I wanted still; 355
And to the heav'nly Vision thus presum'd.
O by what name, for thou above all these,
Above mankind, or ought than mankind higher,
Surpass'est far my naming, how may I
Adore thee, Author of this universe, 360
And all this good to man? For whose well-being
So amply, and with hand so liberal
Thou hast provided all things. But with me
I see not who partakes: in solitude
What happiness, who can enjoy alone? 365
Or all enjoying, what contentment find?
Thus I presumptuous; and the Vision bright,
As with a smile more brighten'd, thus reply'd.
What call'st thou solitude? Is not the earth
With various living creatures, and the air 370
Replenish'd, and all these at they command
To come and play before thee? Know'st thou not
Ther

300

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330

Yet

Their language and their ways? They also know,
And reason not contemptibly: with these
Find pastime, and bear rule? thy realm is large. 375

So spake the universal Lord, and seem'd
So ordering: I, with leave of speech implor'd,
And humble deprecation, thus reply'd:

Let not my words offend thee, heav'nly Pow'r,
My Maker, be propitious while I speak! 380
Hast thou not made me here thy substitute,
And these inferior far beneath me set?

Among unequals what society
Can sort, what harmony, or true delight?
Which must be mutual, in proportion due 385
Giv'n and receiv'd: but in disparity,

The one intense, the other still remiss,
Cannot well suit with either, but soon prove
Tedious alike. Of fellowship I speak
Such as I seek, fit to participate 390

All rational delight; wherein the brute
Cannot be human comfort: they rejoice
Each with their kind, lion with lioness;
So fitly them in pairs thou hast combin'd:
Much less can bird with beast, or fish with fowl 395
So well converse, nor with the ox the ape:
Worse then can man with beast, and least of all.

Whereto th' Almighty answer'd, not displeas'd,
A nice and subtle happiness I see
Thou to thyself proposest, in the choice 400
Of thy associates, Adam; and wilt taste
No pleasure, though in pleasure, solitary.
What think'st thou then of me, and this my state?

Seem I to thee sufficiently possess
Of happiness or not, who am alone 405
From all eternity? for none I know
Second to me, or like; equal much less.

How have I then with whom to hold converse,
Save with the creatures which I made, and those
To me inferior, infinite descents 410

Beneath

Beneath what other creatures are to thee?

He ceas'd, I lowly answer'd. To attain
The height and depth of thy eternal ways,
All human thoughts come short, Supreme of things!

Thou in thyself art perfect, and in thee 415
Is no deficiency found. Not so is Man,

But in degree; the cause of his desire,
By conversation with his like to help,
Or solace his defect. No need that thou
Should'st propagate, already Infinite; 420

And through all numbers absolute, though one.

But Man by number is to manifest
His single imperfection; and beget

Like of his like, his image multiply'd:

In unity defective, which requires 425

Collateral love, and dearest amity.

Thou in thy secrecy although alone,

Best with thyself accompanied, seek'st not

Social communication: yet, so pleas'd,

Canst raise thy creature, to what height thou wilt 430

Of union or communion, devis'd:

I by conversing cannot these erect

From prone, nor in their ways complacency find.

Thus I imbolden'd spake, and freedom us'd

Permissive, and acceptance found; which gain'd 435

This answer from the gracious voice divine.

Thus far to try thee, Adam, I was pleas'd;

And find thee knowing, not of beasts alone,

Which thou hast rightly nam'd, but of thyself:

Expressing well the spirit within thee free, 440

My image, not imparted to the brute:

Whose fellowship therefore unmeet for thee,

Good reason was thou freely shouldst dislike;

And be so minded still. I, ere thou spak'st,

Knew it not good for man to be alone; 445

And no such company as then thou saw'st

Intended thee; for trial only brought,

To see how thou could'st judge of fit and meet,

What

What next I bring shall please thee, be assur'd,
Thy likeness, thy fit help, thy other self, 430
Thy wish, exactly to thy heart's desire.

He ended, or I heard no more, for now
My earthly by his heav'nly overpower'd,
Which it had long stood under, strain'd to th' height
In that celestial colloquy sublime, 455

As with an object that excels the sense,
Dazl'd and spent, sunk down, and sought repair
Of sleep, which instantly fell on me, call'd
By nature as in aid, and clos'd mine eyes.
Mine eyes he clos'd, but open left the cell 460
Of fancy, my internal sight: by which,

Abstract as in a trance, methought I saw,
Though sleeping, where I lay, and saw the shape
Still glorious before whom awake I stood:

Who stooping open'd my left side, and took 465
From thence a rib, with cordial spirits warm,
And life-blood streaming fresh: wide was the wound,
But suddenly with flesh fill'd up and heal'd.

The rib he form'd and fashion'd with his hands:
Under his forming hands a creature grew 470
Man-like, but different sex: so lovely fair!

That what seem'd fair in all the world, seem'd now
Mean, or in her summ'd up, in her contain'd,
And in her looks; which from that time infus'd
Sweetness into my heart, unfelt before: 475

And into all things from her air inspir'd
The spirit of love, and amorous delight.
She disappear'd, and left me dark! I wak'd
To find her, or for ever to deplore

Her loss, and other pleasures all abjure. 480

When out of hope, behold her! not far off;
Such as I saw her in my dream, adorn'd
With what all Earth or Heaven could bestow,
To make her amiable: On she came,

Led by her heav'nly Maker, though unseen, 485
And guided by his voice; nor uninform'd

Of

Of nuptial sanctity, and marriage rites:
 430 Grace was in all her steps, Heav'n in her eye,
 In every gesture dignity and love.
 I overjoy'd could not forbear aloud. 495

This turn hath made amends; Thou hast fulfill'd
 Thy words, Creator bounteous and benign!
 455 Giver of all things fair! but fairest this
 Of all thy gifts, nor enviest. I now see
 Bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh, myself 495
 Before me: Woman is her name, of Man
 Extracted: for this cause he shall forego
 460 Father and mother, and to his wife adhere;
 And they shall be one flesh, one heart, one soul.

She heard me thus, and tho' divinely brought, 505
 Yet innocence, and virgin modesty,
 Her virtue, and the conscience of her worth,
 465 That would be woo'd, and not unsought be won,
 Not obvious, not obtrusive, but retir'd,
 The more desirable: or, to say all, 505
 Nature herself, though pure of sinful thought,
 Wrought in her so, that seeing me, she turn'd;
 470 I follow'd her; she what was honor knew,
 And with obsequious majesty approv'd,
 My pleaded reason. — To the nuptial bow'r 510
 I led her blushing like the morn: all Heav'n,
 And happy constellations, on that hour
 475 Shed their selectest influence: the earth
 Gave sign of gratulation, and each hill:

Joyous the birds; fresh gales, and gentle airs 515
 Whisper'd it to the woods, and from their wings
 Flung rose, flung odors from the spicy shrub,
 480 Disporting till the amorous bird of night
 Sung spousal; and bid haste the evening star
 On this hill-top, to light the bridal lamp. 520

Thus have I told thee all my state, and brought 525
 My story to the sum of earthly bliss,
 485 Which I enjoy; and must confess to find
 In all things else delight indeed, but such

As us'd or not, works in the mind no change, 525
 Nor vehement desire; these delicacies
 I mean of taste, sight, smell, herbs, fruits, and flow'rs,
 Walks, and the melody of birds: but here
 Far otherwise, transported I behold,
 Transported touch: here passion first I felt, 530
 Commotion strange! in all enjoyments else
 Superior, and unmov'd; here only weak,
 Against the charm of beauty's powerful glance.
 Or Nature fail'd in me, and left some part
 Not proof enough such object to sustain; 535
 Or from my side subduſting, took perhaps
 More than enough: at least, on her bestow'd
 Too much of ornament; in outward show
 Elaborate, of inward less exact.
 For well I understand in the prime end 540
 Of Nature, her th' inferior, in the mind
 And inward faculties, which most excel:
 In outward also her resembling less
 His image who made both; and less expressing
 The character of that dominion giv'n 545
 O'er other creatures. Yet, when I approach
 Her loveliness, so absolute she seems
 And in herself complete, so well to know
 Her own; that what she wills to do or say,
 Seems wisest, virtuouſest, discretest, best: 550
 All higher knowledge in her presence falls
 Degraded; wisdom in discourse with her
 Loses discountenanc'd, and like folly shews;
 Authority and reason on her wait,
 As one intended first, not after made 555
 Occasionally: and, to consummate all,
 Greatness of mind, and nobleness, their seat
 Build in her loveliest, and create an awe
 About her, as a guard Angelic plac'd.
 To whom the Angel with contracted brow. 560
 Accuse not Nature, she hath done her part;
 Do thou but thine, and be not diffident

525 Of wisdom: she deserts thee not, if thou
 Dismiss not her, when most thou need'st her nigh;
 By attributing over-much to things
 Less excellent, as thou thyself perceiv'st.
 530 For what admir'st thou, what transports thee so?
 An outside? fair no doubt, and worthy well
 Thy cherishing, thy honoring, and thy love;
 Not thy subjection. Weigh with her thyself;
 Then value: oft-times nothing profits more
 Than self-esteem, grounded on just and right,
 535 Well manag'd: of that skill the more thou know'st,
 The more she will acknowledge thee her Head,
 And to realities yield all her shows:
 Made so adorn for thy delight the more;
 So awful, that with honor thou may'st love
 540 Thy mate; who sees, when thou art seen least wise.
 But if the sense of touch, whereby mankind
 Is propagated; seem such dear delight
 Beyond all other; think the same vouchsaf'd
 545 To cattel, and each beast; which would not be
 To them made common, and divulg'd, if ought
 Therein enjoy'd were worthy to subdue
 The soul of man, or passion in him move.
 550 What higher in her society thou find'st
 Attractive, human, rational, love still:
 In loving thou dost well, in passion not;
 Wherein true love consists not. Love refines
 The thoughts, and heart enlarges; hath his seat
 555 In reason, and is judicious: is the scale
 By which to heav'nly love thou may'st ascend;
 Not sunk in carnal pleasure; for which cause,
 Among the beasts no mate for thee was found.
 To whom thus, half abash'd, Adam reply'd.
 560 Neither her out-side form'd so fair, nor ought
 In procreation common to all kinds,
 Though higher of the genial bed by far,
 And with mysterious reverence I deem
 So much delights me, as those graceful acts,

Those thousand decencies that daily flow : most
 From all her words and actions mix'd with love
 And sweet compliance, which declare unfeign'd
 Union of mind, or in us both one soul ;
 Harmony to behold in wedded pair ;
 More grateful than harmonious sound to th' ear.
 Yet these subject not : I to thee disclose
 What inward thence I feel ; not therefore soild ;
 Who meet with various objects, from the sense
 Variously representing ; yet still free .
 Approve the best , and follow what I approve .
 To love thou blam'st me not ; for love thou say'st
 Leads up to Heav'n , is both the way and guide ;
 Bear with me then , if lawful what I ask :
 Love not the heav'nly spirits ? And how their love
 Express they ? By looks only ? Or do they mix
 Irradiance , virtual or immediate touch ?
 O whom the Angel , with a smile that glow'd
 Celestial rosy-red , love's proper hue ;
 Answer'd . Let it suffice thee that thou know'st
 Us happy , and without love no happiness .
 Whatever pure thou in thy body enjoy'st ,
 And pure thou wert created , we enjoy
 In eminence : and obstacle find none
 Of membrane , joint , or limb , exclusive bars :
 Easier than air with air , if spirits embrace ,
 Total they mix ; union of pure with pure
 Desiring : nor restrain'd conveyance need ,
 As flesh to mix with flesh , or soul with soul .
 But I can now no more : the parting sun
 Beyond the earth's green cape , and verdant isles ,
 Hesperian sets , my signal to depart .
 Be strong , live happy , and love ! But , first of all ,
 Him , whom to love is to obey , and keep
 His great command : take heed lest passion sway
 Thy judgment to do ought , which else free will
 Would not admit : thine , and of all thy sons
 The weal or woe in thee is plac'd ; beware !

I in

I in thy persevering shall rejoice,
And all the blest. Stand fast! to stand or fall.
Free in thine own arbitrement it lies,
Perfect within, no outward aid require,
And all temptation to transgress repel.

So saying, he arose: whom Adam thus
Follow'd with benediction. Since to part,
Go heav'nly guest, ethereal messenger,
Sent from whose sov'reign goodness I adore!
Gentle to me and affable hath been
Thy condescension, and shall be honor'd ever
With grateful memory; thou to mankind,
Be good and friendly still, and oft return!

So parted they, the Angel up to Heav'n,
From the thick shade, and Adam to his bow'r.

The End of the Eighth Book.

B O O K IX.

No more of talk where God or Angel guest
With Man, as with his friend, familiar us'd
To sit indulgent, and with him partake
Rural repast; permitting him the while
Venial discourse unblam'd, I now must change
Those notes to tragic! Foul distrust, and breach
Disloyal on the part of man, revolt,
And disobedience, on the part of Heav'n,
Now alienated! distance, and distaste,
Anger, and just rebuke, and judgement giv'n
That brought into this world a world of woe,
Sin, and her shadow Death, and Misery,
Death's harbinger. Sad talk! yet argument
Not less, but more heroic than the wrath
Of stern Achilles on his foe pursu'd
Thrice fugitive about Troy wall, or rage
Of Turnus for Lavinia disespous'd
Or Neptune's ire, or Juno's, that so long

Perplex'd the Greek, and Cytherea's son;
 If answerable stile I can obtain 20
 Of my celestial patroness, who deigns
 Her nightly visitation unimplor'd,
 And dictates to me slumb'ring; or inspires
 Easy my unpremeditated verse:
 Since first this subject for Heroic song 25
 Pleas'd me, long chusing, and beginning late;
 Not sedulous by nature to indite
 Wars, hitherto the only argument
 Heroic deem'd; chief mast'ry to dissect
 With long and tedious havock fabled Knights 30
 In battels feign'd: the better fortitude
 Of patience, and Heroic Martyrdom,
 Unsung; or to describe Races, and Games,
 Or tilting furniture, emblazon'd shields,
 Impresses quaint, caparisons, and steeds; 35
 Bases, and tinsel trappings, gorgeous Knights
 At joust and torneament; then marshal'd feast
 Serv'd up in hall with sewers, and seneschals:
 The skill of artifice, or office, mean;
 Not that which justly gives Heroic name 40
 To person, or to poem. Me of these
 Nor skill'd, nor studious, higher argument
 Remains; sufficient of itself to raise
 That name, unless an age too late, or cold
 Climate, or years damp my intended wing 45
 Depress'd: and much they may, if all be mine,
 Not hers, who brings it nightly to my ear.
 The Sun was sunk, and after him the star
 Of Hesperus, whose office is to bring
 Twilight upon the earth, short arbiter 50
 'Twixt day and night, and now, from end to end,
 Night's hemisphere had veil'd th' horizon round:
 When Satan who late fled before the threats
 Of Gabriel out of Eden, now improv'd
 In meditated fraud and malice, bent 55
 On man's destruction, maugre what might hap

Of

Of heavier on himself, fearless return'd.
By night he fled, and at midnight return'd
From compassing the earth; cautious of day,
Since Uriel, regent of the Sun, descry'd
His entrance, and forewarn'd the Cherubim,
That kept their watch: thence full of anguish driv'n,
The space of sev'n continu'd nights he rode
With darkness; thrice the equinoctial Line
He circled; four times cross'd the car of Night
From Pole to Pole, traversing each Colure;
On th' eighth return'd, and on the coast averse.
From entrance, or Cherubic watch, by stealth
Found unsuspected way. There was a place,
Now not, tho' in, not time, first wrought the change,
Where Tigris, at the foot of Paradise,
Into a gulph shot under ground, 'till part
Rose up a fountain by the Tree of Life,
In with the river sunk, and with it rose
Satan, involv'd in rising mist; then sought
Where to lie hid: sea he had search'd, and land,
From Eden over Pontus, and the pool
Maeotis, up beyond the river Ob:
Downward as far antarctic: and in length,
West from Orontes, to the ocean barr'd
At Darien: thence, to the land where flows
Ganges, and Indus. Thus the orb he roam'd
With narrow search; and with inspection deep
Consider'd every creature, which of all
Most opportune might serve his wiles; and found
The serpent subtlest beast of all the field.
Him after long debate, irresolute
Of thoughts revolv'd, his final sentence chose
Fit vessel, fittest imp of fraud, in whom
To enter, and his dark suggestions hide
From sharpest sight: for in the wily snake
Whatever sleights, none would suspicious mark,
As from his wit and native subtlety
Proceeding; which in other beasts observ'd

Doubt might beget of diabolic pow'r 95
 Active within, beyond the sense of brute.
 Thus he resolv'd, but first from inward grief
 His bursting passion into plaints thus pour'd.
 O Earth, how like to Heav'n! if not prefer'd
 More justly, seat worthier of Gods, as built
 With second thoughts, reforming what was old!
 For what God after better worse would built
 Terrestrial Heav'n, danc'd round by other Heav'ns
 That shine, yet bear their bright officious lamps,
 Light above light, for thee alone, as seems, 105
 In thee concentrating all their precious beams
 Of sacred influence! As God in Heav'n
 Is center, yet extends to all; so thou
 Centring, receiv'st from all those orbs: in thee,
 Not in themselves, all their known virtue appears 110
 Productive in herb, plant, and nobler birth
 Of creatures animate with gradual life,
 Of growth, sense, reason, all summ'd up in Man:
 With what delight could I have walk'd thee round,
 If I could joy in ought: sweet interchange 115
 Of hill, and valley, rivers, woods, and plains!
 Now land, now sea, and shores with forest crown'd,
 Rocks, dens, and caves! But I in none of these
 Find place or refuge: and the more I see
 Pleasures about me, so much more I feel 120
 Torment within me, as from the hateful siege
 Of contraries: all good to me becomes
 Bane; and in Heav'n much worse would be my state;
 But neither here seek I, no nor in Heav'n
 To dwell, unless by mastering Heav'n's Supreme: 125
 Nor hope to be myself less miserable
 By what I seek, but others to make such
 As I, though thereby worse to me redound.
 For only in destroying I find ease
 To my relentless thoughts; and him destroy'd, 130
 Or won to what may work his utter loss,
 For whom all this was made; all this will soon

Follow, as to him, link'd in weal or woe:
 In woe then! that destruction wide may range.
 To me shall be the glory sole among
 Th' infernal Powers, in one day to have marr'd
 What he Almighty say'd, six nights and days
 Continu'd making; and who knows how long
 Before had been contriving? though perhaps
 Not longer than since I, in one night, freed
 From servitude inglorious well nigh half
 Th' Angelic name, and thinner left the throng
 Of his adorers. He, to be aveng'd,
 And to repair his numbers thus impair'd;
 Whether such virtue spent of old now fail'd
 More Angels to create, if they at least
 Are his created, or, to spite us more,
 Determin'd to advance into our room
 A creature form'd of earth, and him endow,
 Exalted from so base original!
 With heavenly spoils; our spoils. What he decreed,
 He effected; Man he made, and for him built
 Magnificent this world, and earth his seat,
 Him Lord pronounc'd; and, o indignity!
 Subjected to his service Angel wings,
 And flaming ministers, to watch and tend
 Their earthly charge. Of these the vigilance
 I dread, and to elude, thus wrap'd in mist
 Of midnight vapor glide obscure, and pry
 In every bush and brake, where hap may find
 The serpent sleeping; in whose mazy folds
 To hide me, and the dark intent I bring.
 O foul descent! that I, who erst contended
 With Gods, to sit the highest, am now constrain'd
 Into a beast; and mix'd with bestial slime,
 This essence to incarnate and imbrute,
 That to the height of Deity aspir'd!
 But what will not ambition, and revenge,
 Descend to? who aspires, must down as low.
 As high he soar'd; obnoxious, first or last.

To basest things. Revenge, at first though sweet,
 Bitter ere long back on itself recoils:
 Let it; I reckon not, so it light well aim'd!
 Since higher I fall short, on him who next
 Provokes my envy, this new favorite 175
 Of Heav'n, this man of clay, son of despite,
 Whom, us the more to spite, his maker rais'd
 From dust, spite then with spite is best repaid.

So saying, through each thicket, dank or dry,
 Like a black mist low creeping, he held on 180
 His midnight search, where soonest he might find
 The serpent: him fast sleeping soon he found,
 In labyrinth of many a round self-roll'd;
 His head the midst, well stor'd with subtle wiles:
 Not yet in horrid shade, or dismal den, 185
 Nor nocent yet; but, on the grassy herb,
 Fearless unfeard he slept. In at his mouth
 The Devil enter'd; and his brutal sense,
 In heart, or head, possessing, soon inspir'd
 With ast intelligent; but his sleep 190
 Disturb'd not, waiting close th' approach of morn.

Now when as sacred light began to dawn
 In Eden on the humid flow'rs, that breath'd
 Their morning incense, when all things that breathe
 From th'earth's great altar send up silent praise 195
 To the Creator, and his nostrils fill
 With grateful smell, forth came the human pair,
 And join'd their vocal worship to the quire
 Of creatures wanting voice: that done, partake
 The season, prime for sweetest scents and airs: 200
 Then commune, how that day they best may ply
 Their growing work, for much their work outgrew
 The hands dispatch of two, gard'ning so wide,
 And Eve first to her husband thus began.

Adam, well may we labor still to dress 205
 This garden, still to tend plant, herb and flow'r,
 Our pleasant task injoin'd; but 'till more hands
 Aid us, the work under our labor grows

Luxu-

Luxurious by restraint: what we by day
 Lop overgrown, or prune, or prop, or bind, 216
 One night or two with wanton growth derides
 Tending to wild. Thou therefore now advise,
 Or hear what to my mind first thoughts present:
 Let us divide our labors: thou, where choice
 Leads thee, or where most needs, whether to wind 219
 The woodbine round this arbor, or direct
 The clasping ivy where to climb: while I,
 In yonder spring of roses, intermix'd
 With myrtle, find what to redress till noon.
 For while so near each other thus all day 220
 Our talk we choose, what wonder if so near
 Looks intervene, and smiles, or object new
 Casual discourse draw on; which intermits
 Our day's-work, brought to little, though begun
 Early, and th' hour of supper comes unearn'd. 225

To whom mild answer Adam thus return'd.
 Sole Eve, associate sole, to me beyond
 Compare, above all living creatures dear!
 Well hast thou motion'd, well thy thoughts employ'd,
 How we might best fulfil the work, which here 230
 God hath assign'd us; nor of me shalt pass
 Unprais'd: for nothing lovelier can be found
 In woman, than to study household good,
 And good works in her husband to promote.
 Yet not so strictly hath our Lord impos'd 235
 Labor, as to debar us when we need
 Refreshment, whether food, or talk between,
 Food of the mind, or this sweet intercourse
 Of looks and smiles, for smiles from reason flow,
 To brute deny'd, and are of love the food; 240
 Love, not the lowest end of human life.
 For not to irksome toil, but to delight
 He made us, and delight to reason join'd.
 These paths and bow'rs doubt not but our joint hands
 Will keep from wilderness with ease, as wide 245
 As we need walk; till younger hands ere long

After

Assist us. But, if much converse perhaps
 Thee satiate, to short absence I could yield:
 For solitude sometimes is best society.
 And short retirement urges sweet return. 250
 But, other doubt possesses me; least harm
 Befall thee fever'd from me; for thou know'st
 What hath been warn'd us, what malicious foe
 Envyng our happiness, and of his own
 Despairing, seeks to work us woe and shame. 255
 By fly assault: and somewhere nigh at hand
 Watches, no doubt, with greedy hope to find
 His wish, and best advantage, us afunder;
 Hopeless to circumvent us join'd, where each
 To other speedy aid might lend at need; 260
 Whether his first design be to withdraw
 Our fealty from God; or to disturb
 Conjugal love; than which perhaps no bliss
 Enjoy'd by us excites his envy more:
 Or this, or worse, leave not the faithful side. 265
 That gave thee being, still shades thee and protects.
 The wife, where danger or dishonor lurks,
 Safest and seemliest by her husband stays,
 Who guards her, or with her the worst indures.
 To whom the virgin majesty of Eve, 270
 As one who loves, and some unkindness meets,
 With sweet austere composure thus reply'd.
 Offspring of Heav'n and earth, and all earth's Lord!
 That such an enemy we have, who seeks
 Our ruin, both by thee inform'd I learn. 275
 And from the parting Angel over-heard,
 As in a shady nook I stood behind,
 Just then return'd at shut of ev'ning flow'rs.
 But that thou shouldst my firmness therefore doubt
 To God or thee, because we have a foe. 280
 May tempt it, I expected not to hear.
 His violence thou fear'st not, being such
 As we, not capable of death, or pain,
 Can either not receive, or can repel.

His

His fraud is then thy fear; which plain inferns 285
Thy equal fear, that my firm faith, and love,
Can by his fraud be shaken or seduc'd;
Thoughts, which how found they harbor in thy breast,
Adam, mis-thought of her to thee so dear?

To whom with healing words Adam reply'd. 290
Daughter of God and Man, immortal Eve!
For such thou art, from sin and blame entire:
Not dissident of thee do I dissuade
Thy absence from my sight, but to avoid
Th' attempt itself, intended by our foe.

For he, who tempts, though in vain, at least asperges 295
The tempted with dishonor foul; suppos'd
Not incorruptible or faith, not proof
Against temptation. Thou thyself with scorn
And anger would'st resent the offer'd wrong;
Though ineffectual found: misdeem not then,
If such affront I labor to avert.

From thee alone, which on us both at once 300
The enemy, though bold, will hardly dare;
Or daring, first on me th' assault shall light!
Nor thou his malice and false guile condemn:
Subtile he needs must be, who could seduce
Angels: nor think superfluous other's aid.

I, from the influence of thy looks, receive 305
Access in every virtue; in thy sight
More wise, more watchful, stronger, if need were
Of outward strength, while shame, thou looking on,
Shame to be overcome, or over-reach'd,
Would utmost vigor raise, and rais'd unite.
Why shouldst not thou like sense within thee feel
When I am present, and the tryal chusest
With me, best witness of thy virtue try'd?

So spake domestic Adam in his care, 310
And matrimonial love: but Eve, who thought
Less attributed to her faith sincere,
Thus her reply, with accent sweet renew'd.
If this be our condition, thus to dwell

In narrow circuit straiten'd by a foe,
 Subtle or violent, we not indued
 Single with like defence, where ever met,
 How are we happy, still in fear of harm?
 But harm precedes not sin: only our foe
 Tempting affronts us with his foul esteem
 Of our integrity; his foul esteem
 Sticks no dishonor on our front, but turns
 Foul on himself; then wherefore shunn'd or fear'd
 By us? who rather double honor gain
 From his surmise prov'd false, find peace within,
 Favor from Heav'n, our witness from th' event.
 And what is faith, love, virtue unassay'd
 Alone, without exterior help sustain'd?
 Let us not then suspect our happy state
 Left so imperfect by the Maker wise,
 As not secure to single, or combin'd:
 Frail is our happiness, if this be so,
 And Eden were no Eden thus expos'd.
 To whom thus Adam fervently reply'd,
 O woman! best are all things as the will
 Of God ordain'd them: His creating hand
 Nothing imperfect or deficient left
 Of all that he created; much less man,
 Or ought that might his happy state secure:
 Secure from outward force; within himself
 The danger lies, yet lies within his pow'r.
 Against his will he can receive no harm.
 But God left free the will; for what obeys
 Reason, is free; and reason he made right:
 But bid her well beware, and still erect,
 Lest by some fair appearing good surpris'd,
 She dictate false, and misinform the will
 To do what God expressly hath forbid.
 Not then mistrust, but tender love enjoins,
 That I should mind thee oft, and mind thou me.
 Firm we subsist, yet possible to swerve,
 Since reason not impossible may meet

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Some specious object, by the foe suborn'd;
And fall into deception unaware,
Not keeping strictest watch, as she was warn'd.
Seek not temptation then, which to avoid
Were better; and most likely, if from me
Thou sever not; trial will come unsought.
Wouldst thou approve thy constancy? approve
First thy obedience; th' other who can know,
Not seeing thee attempted? who attest?
But if thou think, trial unsought may find
Us both securer, than thus warn'd thou seem'st.

Go for thy stay, not free, absents thee more;
Go in thy native innocence! rely
On what thou hast of virtue; summon all:
For God tow'rs thee hath done his part, do thine.

So spake the patriarch of mankind; but Eve
Persisted, yet submits, though last, reply'd.

With thy permission then, and thus forewarn'd,
Chiefly by what thy own last reasoning words

Touch'd only; that our tryal, when least sought,
May find us both perhaps far less prepar'd,

The willinger I go: nor much expect
A foe so proud will first the weaker seek;

So bent, the more shall shame him his repulse.

Thus saying, from her husband's hand her hand
Soft she withdrew; and like a Wood-Nymph light

Oread, or Dryad, or of Delia's train,
Betook her to the groves: but Delia's self

In gait surpass'd, and Goddess-like deport;
Though not, as she, with bow and quiver arm'd;

But with such gard'ning tools as art, yet rude,
Guileless of fire had form'd, or Angels brought.

To Pales, or Pomona thus adorn'd,
Likeliest she seem'd, Pomona, when she fled

Vertumnus, or to Ceres in her prime,
Yet virgin of Proserpina from Jove.

Her long with ardent look his eye persud
Delighted, but desiring more her stay,

Oft he to her his charge of quick return
 Repeated; she to him as oft engag'd
 To be return'd by noon amid the bow'r;
 And all things in best order, to invite
 Noontide repast, or afternoon's repose.
 O much deceiv'd, much failing, hapless Eve!
 Of thy presum'd return! event perverse!
 Thou never from that hour in Paradise
 Found'st either sweet repast, or sound repose!
 Such ambush, laid among sweet flow'rs, and shades,
 Waited with hellish rancor imminent
 To intercept thy way, or send thee back
 Despoil'd of innocence, of faith, of bliss! —
 For now, and since first break of dawn, the Fiend,
 Mere serpent in appearance, forth was come,
 And on his quest, where likeliest he might find
 The only two of mankind; but in them
 The whole included race, his purpos'd prey.
 In bow'r and field he sought, where any tuft
 Of grove, or garden-plot more pleasant lay,
 Their tendance or plantation for delight,
 By fountain, or by shady rivulet.
 He sought them both, but wish'd his hap might find
 Eve separate; he wish'd, but not with hope
 Of what so seldom chanc'd: when to his wish,
 Beyond his hope, Eve separate he spies,
 Veil'd in a cloud of fragrance, where she stood,
 Half-spy'd, so thick the roses blushing round
 About her glow'd; half-stooping to support
 Each flow'r of slender stalk, whose head though gay
 Carnation, purple, azure, or speck'd with gold,
 Hung drooping unsustain'd; them she upstays
 Gently with myrtle-band; mindless the while
 Herself, though fairest, unsupported flow'r,
 From her best prop so far, and storm so nigh!
 Nearer he drew, and many a walk travers'd
 Of stateliest covert, cedar, pine or palm;
 Then voluble and bold; now hid, now seen,

Among

Among thick-woven arborets and flow'rs
 Imborder'd on each bank, the hand of Eve:
 Spot more delicious than those gardens feign'd
 Or of reviv'd Adonis: or renown'd
 Alcinous, host of old Laertes' son;
 Or that, not mystic, where the sapient king
 Held dalliance with his fair Egyptian spouse,
 Much he the place admir'd, the person more:
 As one who long in populous city pent,
 Where houses thick and sewers annoy the air,
 Forth issuing on a summer's morn, to breathe
 Among the pleasant villages, and farms
 Adjoin'd, from each thing met conceives delight;
 The smell of grain, or tedded grafs, or kine,
 Or dairy, each rural sight, each rural sound;
 If chance, with Nymphlike step, fair virgin pass,
 What pleasing seem'd, for her now pleases more;
 She most, and in her look sums all delight:
 Such pleasure took the serpent to behold
 This flow'ry plat, the sweet recess Eve
 Thus early, thus alone: her heav'nly form
 Angelic, but more soft, and feminine,
 Her graceful innocence, her every air
 Of gesture or least action overaw'd
 His malice, and with rapine sweet bereav'd
 His fierceness of the fierce intent it brought.
 That space the Evil-one abstracted stood
 From his own evil, and for the time remain'd
 Stupidly good; of enmity disarm'd,
 Of guile, of hate, of envy, of revenge;
 But the hot hell that always in him burns,
 Though in mid Heav'n, soon ended his delight;
 And tortures him now more, the more he sees
 Of pleasure not for him ordain'd: then soon
 Fierce hate he recollects, and all his thoughts
 Of mischief, gratulating, thus excites.

Thoughts, whither have ye led me! with what sweet
 Compulsion thus transported to forget

N

What

What hither brought us! hate, not love, nor hope
 Of Paradise for Hell, hope here to taste
 Of pleasure, but all pleasure to destroy,
 Save what is in destroying; other joy
 To me is lost. Then let me not let pass
 Occasion which now smiles; behold alone 480
 The woman, opportune to all attempts!
 Her husband, for I view far round, not nigh,
 Whose higher intellectual more I shun,
 And strength, of courage haughty, and of limb
 Heroic built, though of terrestrial mold, 485
 Foe not formidable! exempt from wound;
 I not: so much hath Hell debas'd, and pain
 Infeebled me, to what I was in Heav'n!
 She fair, divinely fair! fit love for Gods;
 Not terrible, though terror be in love 490
 And beauty, not approach'd by stronger hate;
 Hate, stronger under shew of love well feign'd;
 The way which to her ruin now I tend.

So spake the enemy of mankind, inclos'd
 In serpent, inmate bad! and toward Eve 495
 Address'd his way: not with indented wave,
 Prone on the ground, as since; but on his rear,
 Circular base of rising folds, that tower'd
 Fold above fold, a surging maze! His head
 Crested aloft, and carbuncle his eyes; 500
 With burnish'd neck of verdant gold, erect
 Amidst his circling spires, that on the grass
 Floated redundant: pleasing was his shape,
 And lovely! Never since of serpent-kind
 Lovelier; not those that in Illyria chang'd 505
 Hermione and Cadmus; or the God
 In Epidaurus: nor to which transform'd
 Ammonian Jove, or Capitoline was seen;
 He, with Olympias; this, with her who bore
 Scipio the height of Rome. With tract oblique 510
 At first, as one who sought access, but fear'd
 To interrupt, side-long he works his way;

hope

As when a ship, by skilfull steers-man wrought
Nigh river's mouth or foreland, where the wind
Veers oft, as oft so steers, and shifts her sail: 515

480

So varied he, and of his tortous train
Curl'd many a wanton wreath, in sight of Eve,
To lure her eye: she busied, heard the sound
Of rustling leaves, but minded not, as us'd
To such disport before her trough the field, 520

485

From every beast; more duteous at her call,
Than at Circean call the herd disguis'd.
He bolder now, uncall'd before her stood;
But as in gaze admiring: oft he bow'd
His turret crest; and sleek enamel'd neck, 525

490

Fawning, and lick'd the ground whereon she trod.
His gentle dumb expression turn'd at length
The eye of Eve to mark his play; he glad
Of her attention gain'd, with serpent-tongue
Organic, or impulse of vocal air, 530

495

His fraudulent temptation thus began.
Wonder not, sov'reign Mistress! if perhaps
Thou canst, who art sole wonder; much less arm
Thy looks, the Heav'n of mildness, with disdain,
Displeas'd that I approach thee thus, and gaze 535

500

Insatiate; I thus single; nor have fear'd
Thy awful brow, more awful thus retir'd.
Fairest resemblance of thy Maker fair!
Thee all things living gaze on, all things thine
By gift, and thy celestial beauty adore, 540

505

With ravishment beheld! there best beheld,
Where universally admir'd: but here
In this inclosure wild, these beasts among,
Beholders rude, and shallow to discern
Half what in thee is fair, one man except, 545

510

Who sees thee, and what is one! who shouldst be seen
A Goddess among Gods, ador'd and serv'd
By Angels numberless, thy daily train.

So glaz'd the tempter, and his proem tun'd;
Into the heart of Eve his words made way, 550

Though at the voice much marvelling: at length,
Not unamaz'd, she thus in answer spake.

What may this mean? Language of man pronounc'd
By tongue of brute, and human sense express'd?

The first, at least, of these I thought deny'd 555

To beasts; whom God, on their creation-day,
Created mute to all articulate sound:

The latter I demur; for in their look,
Much reason, and in their actions, oft appears.

Thee, serpent, subtlest beast of all the field 560

I knew, but not with human voice indu'd.

Redouble then this miracle, and say,

How cam'st thou speakable of mute; and how

To me so friendly grown above the rest 565

Of brutal kind, that daily are in sight?
Say! for such wonder claims attention due.

To whom the guileful tempter thus reply'd:

Empress of this fair world, resplendent Eve!

Easy to me it is to tell thee all

What thou command'st, and right thou shouldst be obey'd.

I was at first as other beasts that grace

The trodden herb, of abject thoughts and low,

As was my food! nor ought but food discern'd

Or sex; and apprehended nothing high,

Till on an day roving the field, I chanc'd 775

A goodly tree far distant to behold,

Loaden with fruit of fairest colors mix'd,

Ruddy and gold: I nearer drew to gaze;

When from the boughs a savoury odor blown,

Grateful to appetite, more pleas'd my sense 580

Than smell of sweetest fenel, or the treats

Of ewe or goat dropping with milk at ev'n,

Unfuck'd of lamb, or kid, that tend their play.

To satisfy the sharp desire I had

Of tasting those fair apples, I resolv'd 585

Not to defer: hunger and thirst at once,

Pow'rful persuaders! quicken'd at the scent

Of that alluring fruit, urg'd me so keen.

About

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555

About the mossy trunk I wound me soon;
For high from ground, the branches would require
Thy utmost reach, or Adam's: Round the tree
All other beasts that saw, with like desire
Longing and evying stood, but could not reach.

560

Amid the tree now got, where plenty hung
Tempting so nigh, to pluck and eat my fill
I spar'd not; for such pleasure till that hour
At feed, or fountain, never had I found.

565

Sated at length, ere long I might perceive
Strange alteration in me, to degree
Of reason in my inward pow'rs; and speech
Wanted not long; though to this shape retain'd.
Thenceforth to speculations high, or deep,

obey'd.

I turn'd my thoughts; and with capacious mind
Consider'd all things visible in heav'n,
Or earth, or middle; all things fair and good!

But all that fair and good, in thy divine
Semblance, and in thy beauty's heav'nly ray
United I beheld: no fair to thine

Equivalent, or second! which compell'd
Me thus, though importune perhaps, to come
And gaze, and worship thee, of right declar'd
Sov'reign of creatures, universal dame!

775

So talk'd the spirited fly snake: and Eve,
Yet more amaz'd, unwary thus reply'd.

Serpent! thy overpraising leaves in doubt
The virtue of that fruit, in thee first prov'd.

580

But say, where grows the tree, from hence how far?
For many are the trees of God that grow

In Paradise, and various, yet unknown
To us, in such abundance lies our choice,

585

As leaves a greater store of fruit untouch'd:
Still hanging incorruptible, till men

Grow up to their provision, and more hands
Help to disburden nature of her birth.

To whom the wily adder, blithe and glad:
Empress! the way is ready, and not long,

About

Beyond a row of myrtles, on a flat,
 Fast by a fountain, one small thicket pass
 Of blowing myrrh, and balm: if thou accept
 My conduct, I can bring thee thither soon. 360

Lead then, said Eve. He leading swiftly roll'd
 In tangles, and made intricate seem strait,
 To mischief swift: hope elevates, and joy
 Brightens his crest: as when a wand'ring fire,
 Compact of unctuous vapor, which the night 635
 Condenses, and the cold environs round,
 Kindled through agitation to a flame,
 Which oft, they say, some evil spirit attends,
 Hovering and blazing with delusive light,
 Misleads th' amaz'd night-wanderer from his way 640
 To bogs and mires, and of thro' pond or pool,
 There swallow'd up and lost, from succour far:
 So glister'd the dire snake, and into fraud
 Led Eve, our credulous mother, to the tree
 Of prohibition, root of all our woe: 645
 Which when she saw, thus to her guide she spake.

Serpent, we might have spar'd our coming hither,
 Fruitless to me, though fruit be here to excess:
 The credit of whose virtue rest with thee;
 Wondrous indeed, if cause of such effects! 650
 But of this tree we may not taste, nor touch,
 God so commanded; and lest that command
 Sole daughter of his voice: the rest, we live
 Law to ourselves, our reason is our law.

To whom the tempter guilefully reply'd: 655
 Indeed! Had God then said that of the fruit
 Of all these garden-trees ye shall not eat,
 Ye Lords declar'd of all in earth, or air?

To whom thus Eve, yet sinless. Of the fruit
 Of each tree in the Garden we may eat; 660
 But of the fruit of this fair tree amidst
 The Garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat
 Thereof, nor shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

She scarce had said, tho' brief, when now more bold
 The

The tempter, but with shew of zeal and love
To man, and indignation at his wrong,
New part puts on; and as to passion mov'd,
Fluctuates disturb'd, yet comely, and in act
Rais'd, as of some great matter to begin.

As when of old some Orator renown'd,
In Athens, or free Rome, where eloquence
Flourish'd, since mute! to some great cause address'd,
Stood in himself collected; while each part,
Motion, each act won audience ere the tongue;
Sometimes in height began, as no delay
Of preface brooking, through his zeal of right;
So standing, moving, or to height up-grown,
The tempter all impassion'd thus began.

O sacred, wife, and wisdom-giving plant,
Mother of science! now I feel thy pow'r
Within me clear, not only do discern
Things in their causes, but to trace the ways
Of highest agents, deem'd however wise.
Queen of this universe! do not believe
Those rigid threats of death: ye shall not die:
How should ye? by the fruit? it gives you life
To knowledge: by the threatner? look on me,
Me! who have touch'd, and tasted; yet both live,
And life more perfect have attain'd than fate
Meant me, by venturing higher than my lot.
Shall that be shut to man, which to the beast
Is open? Or will God incense his ire
For such a petty trespass, and not praise
Rather your dauntless virtue, whom the pain
Of death denounc'd, whatever thing death be,
Deterr'd not from achieving what might lead
To happier life, knowledge of good and evil?
Of good, how just? of evil, if what is evil
Be real, why not known, since easier shunn'd?
God therefore cannot hurt you, and be just:
Not just, not God; not fear'd then, nor obey'd:
Your fear itself of death removes the fear.

Why then was this forbid? Why, but to awe;
 Why, but to keep you low and ignorant,
 His worshippers: He knows that in the day 705
 You eat thereof, your eyes, that seem so clear,
 Yet are but dim, shall perfectly be then
 Open'd and clear'd: and ye shall be as Gods,
 Knowing both Good and Evil, as they know.
 That ye shall be as Gods, since I as Man, 710
 Internal Man, is but proportion meet:
 I of brute, human, ye of human, Gods,
 So ye shall die perhaps, by putting off
 Human, to put on Gods; death to he wish'd,
 Tho' threaten'd, which no worse than this can bring. 715
 And what are Gods, that man may not become
 As they, participating God-like food?
 The Gods are first, and that advantage use
 On our belief, that all from them proceeds:
 I question it, for this fair earth I see, 720
 Warm'd by the Sun, producing every kind;
 Them nothing: if they all things, who inclos'd
 Knowledge of Good and Evil in this tree,
 That whoso eats thereof, forthwith attains
 Wisdom without their leave? and wherein lies 725
 Th' offence, that man should thus attain to know?
 What can your knowledge hurt him, or this tree
 Impart against his will, if all be his?
 Or is it envy, and can envy dwell
 In heav'nly breasts? These, these, and many more
 Causes import your need of this fair fruit:
 Goddesses humane, reach then, and freely taste!
 He ended, and his words, replete with guile,
 Into her heart too easy entrance won:
 Fix'd on the fruit she gaz'd, which to behold 735
 Might tempt alone: and in her ears the sound
 Yet rung of his persuasive words, impregn'd
 With reason, to her seeming, and with truth:
 Mean while the hour of noon drew on, and wak'd
 An eager appetite, rais'd by the smell 740

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So savoury of that fruit; which with desire,
Inclinable now grown to touch, or taste,
Solicited her longing eye: yet first
Pausing a while, thus to herself she mus'd.

Great are thy virtues, doubtless, best of fruits! 475
Though kept from man, and worthy to be admir'd,
Whose taste, too long forborn, at first assay
Gave elocution to the mute, and taught
The tongue not made for speech, to speak thy praise:
Thy praise he also who forbids thy use, 750
Conceals not from us, naming thee the tree
Of knowledge; knowledge booth of good and evil:
Forbids us then to taste: but his forbidding
Commends thee more, while it infers the good
By thee communicated, and our want: 755

For good unknown, sure is not had; or had
And yet unknown, is as not had at all.
In plain then, what forbids he but to know,
Forbids us good, forbids us to be wise?
Such prohibitions bind not. — But if death 760
Bind us with after-bands, what profits then
Our inward freedom? In the day we eat
Of this fair fruit, our doom is, we shall die. —
How dies the serpent? he hath eat'n and lives.
And knows, and speaks, and reasons, and discerns;
Irrational till then. For us alone
Was death invented? or to us deny'd

This intellectual food, for beasts reserv'd?
For beasts it seems: yet that one beast which first
Hath tasted, envies not, but brings with joy 770
The good befall'n him, author unsuspect,
Friendly to man, far from deceit or guile.
What fear I then, rather what know to fear
Under this ignorance of good and evil,
Of god or death, of law or penalty? 775
Here grows the cure of all, this fruit divine!

Fair to the eye, inviting to the taste,
Of virtue to make wise: What hinders then
To

To reach, and feed at once both body and mind?

So saying, her rash hand in evil hour 780
Forth reaching to the fruit, she pluck'd, she eat:
Earth felt the wound; and Nature from her seat
Sighing through all her works gave sign of woe,
That all was lost. Back to the thicker slunk
The guilty serpent, and well might, for Eve 785
Intent now wholly on her taste, nought else
Regarded; such delight till then, as seem'd,
In fruit she never tasted, whether true
Or fancy'd so, through expectation high
Of knowledge; nor was God-head from her thought.
Greedily she ingorg'd without restraint,
And knew not eating death. Sate at length,
And highten'd as with wine, jocund and boon
Thus to herself she pleatingly began.

O sov'reign, virtuous, precious of all trees 795
In Paradise! of operation blest
To sapience! hitherto obscur'd, infam'd,
And thy fair fruit let hang, as to no end
Created: but henceforth my early care,
Not without song, each morning, and due praise, 800
Shall tend thee, and the fertile burden ease
Of thy full branches offer'd free to all:
Till dieted by thee, I grow mature
In knowledge, as the Gods who all things know:
Though others envy what they cannot give; 805
For had the gift been theirs, it had not here
Thus grown. Experience, next to thee I owe,
Best guide; not following thee, I had remain'd
In ignorance, thou open'st wisdom's way,
And giv'st access, though secret she retire. 810
And I perhaps am secret: Heav'n is high,
High, and remote to see from thence distinct
Each thing on earth; and other care, perhaps,
May have diverted from continual watch
Our great forbidding, safe with all his spies 815
About him. — But, to Adam in what sort

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Shall I appear? shall I to him make known
As yet my change, and give him to partake
Full happiness with me? or rather not;
But keep the odds of knowledge in my pow'r, 820
Without copartner? so to add what wants

In female sex, the more to draw his love,
And render me more equal, and perhaps,
A thing not undefirable, sometime
Superior: for inferior who is free? 825

This may be well. — But, what if God hath seen,
And death ensue? Then I shall be no more,
And Adam wedded to another Eve,
Shall live with her injoying, I extinct;

A death to think! Confirm'd then I resolve, 830
Adam shall share with me in bliss or woe:
So dear I love him, that with him, all deaths
I could indure; without him live no life.

So saying, from the tree her step she turn'd,
But first low reverence done, as to the Pow'r 835
That dwelt within, whose presence had infus'd
Into the plant scintial sap, deriv'd

From nectar, drink of Gods. Adam the while,
Waiting desirous her return, had wove
Of choicest flow'rs a garland, to adorn 840
Her tresses, and her trual labors crown:

As reapers oft are wont their harvest queen.
Great joy he promis'd to his thoughts, and new
Solace in her return, so long delay'd:
Yet oft his heart, divine of something ill, 845

Misgave him; he the faltring measure felt;
And forth to meet her went, the way she took
That morn, when first they parted. By the Tree
Of knowledge he must pass; there be her met,
Scarce from the tree returning: in her hand 850

A bough of fairest fruit, that downy smil'd,
New gather'd, and ambrosial smell diffus'd,
To him she hasted; in her face excuse
Came prologue, and apology too prompt;

Which,

Which with bland words at will she thus addrest. 855
 Hast thou not wonder'd, Adam, at my stay?
 Thee I have mis'd, and thought it long, depriv'd
 Thy presence, agony of love till now
 Not felt, nor shall be twice; for never more
 Mean I to try, what rash untry'd I sought, 860
 The pain of absence from thy sight. But strange
 Hath been the cause, and wonderful to hear,
 This Tree is not as we are told, a Tree
 Of danger tasted, nor to evil unknown
 Op'ning the way; but of divine effect 865
 To open eyes, and make them Gods who taste;
 And hath been tasted such. The serpent wise,
 Or not restrain'd as we, or not obeying,
 Hath eaten of the fruit; and is become
 Not dead, as we are threaten'd; but thenceforth 870
 Indued with human voice, and human sense,
 Reasoning to admiration: and with me
 Persuasively hath so prevail'd, that I
 Have also tasted, and have also found
 Th' effects to correspond: opener mine eyes, 876
 Dim erst; dilated spirits, ampler heart,
 And growing up to Godhead; which for thee
 Chiefly I sought, without thee can despise:
 For bliss, as thou hast part, to me is bliss:
 Tedious, unshar'd with thee, and odious soon. 885
 Thou therefore also taste, that equal lot
 May join us; equal joy, as equal love:
 Lest, thou not tasting, different degree
 Disjoin us, and I then too late renounce
 Deity for thee, when fate will not permit. 885
 Thus Eve with countenance blithe her story told;
 But in her cheek distemper flushing glow'd.
 On th' other side, Adam, soon as he heard
 The fatal trespass done by Eve, amaz'd,
 Astonied stood and blank; while horror chill 890
 Ran through his veins, and all his joints relax'd:
 From his slack hand the garland wreath'd for Eve

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Down dropt, and all the faded Roses shed:
Speechless he stood and pale! till thus at length
First to himself he inward silence broke. 895

O fairest of creation, last and best
Of all God's works! Creature in whom excell'd
Whatever can to sight or thought be form'd,
Holy, divine, good, amiable, or sweet!
How art thou lost, how on a sudden lost, 900
Defac'd, deflower'd, and now to death devote?

Rather how hast thou yielded to transgress
The strict forbiddance! how, to violate
The sacred fruit forbidd'n! some curst fraud
Of enemy hath beguil'd thee, yet unknown;
And me with thee hath ruin'd; for with thee 905
Certain my resolution is to die!

How can I live without thee! how forgo
Thy sweet converse and love, so dearly join'd,
To live again in these wild woods forlorn!
Should God create another Eve, and I 910
Another rib afford, yet loss of thee

Would never from my heart! no, no! I feel
The link of nature draw me: flesh of flesh,
Bone of my bone thou art, and from thy state 915
Mine never shall be parted, bliss or woe!

So having said, as one from sad dismay
Recomforted, and, after thoughts disturb'd,
Submitting to what seem'd remediless,
Thus in calm mood his words to Eve he turn'd: 920

Bold deed thou hast presum'd, adventurous Eve!
And peril great provok'd, who thus hast dar'd,
Had it been only conveting to eye
That sacred fruit, sacred to abstinence;
Much more to taste it under ban to touch. 925
But past who can recall, or done undo?

Not God Omnipotent, nor Fate: yet so
Perhaps thou shalt not die, perhaps the fast
Is not so heinous now, foretasted fruit,
Profan'd first by the serpent, by him first 930

Made common and unhallow'd e're our taste:
 Nor yet on him found deadly; he yet lives,
 Lives, as thou saidst, and gains to live as man
 Higher degree of life: inducement strong
 To us, as likely tasting to attain 935
 Proportional ascent; which cannot be
 But to be Gods, or Angels, Demi-gods.
 Nor can I think that God, Creator wise!
 Thoug threatning, will in earnest so destroy
 Us his prime creatures; dignified so high, 940
 Set over all his works; which in our fall,
 For us created, needs with us must fail,
 Dependent made: so God shall uncreate,
 Be frustrate, do, undo, and labor lose;
 Not well conceiv'd of God: who tho' his pow'r 945
 Creation could repeat, yet would be loath
 Us to abolish; lest the Adversary
 Triumph and say: „Fickle their state whom God
 „Most favors! who can please him long? Me first
 „He ruin'd, now mankind: whom will he next?“ 950
 Matter of scorn, not to be giv'n the Foe.
 However I with thee have fix'd my lot,
 Certain to undergo like doom: if death
 Confort with thee, death is to me as life:
 So forcible within my hearth I feel 955
 The bond of nature draw me to my own,
 My own in in thee! for what thou art is mine:
 Our state cannot be sever'd, we are one,
 One flesh; tho lose thee were to lose myself.
 So Adam; and thus Eve to him reply'd. 960
 O glorious tryal of exceeding love,
 Illustrious evidence, example high,
 Ingaging me to emulate! but short
 Of thy perfection, how shall I attain,
 Adam? from whose dear side I boast me sprung? 965
 And gladly of or union hear thee speak,
 One heart, one soul in both! whereof good proof
 This day affords; declaring thee resolv'd,

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Rather than death or ought than death more dread,
 Shall separate us, link'd in love so dear! 970

To undergo with me one guilt, one crime,
 If any be, of tasting this fair fruit:

Whose virtue, for of good still good proceeds,
 Direst, or by occasion, hath presented

This happy trial of thy love; which else 975
 So eminently never had been known.

Were it I thought Death menanc'd would ensue
 This my attempt, I would sustain alone

The worst, and not persuade thee; rather die
 Deserted, than oblige thee with a fast 980

Pernicious to thy peace, chiefly assur'd
 Remarkably so late of thy so true,

So faithful love unequal'd; but I feel
 Far otherwise th' event, not death, but life

Augmented; open'd eyes, new hopes, new joys, 985
 Taste so divine! that what of sweet before

Hath touch'd my sense, flat seems to this, and harsh.
 On my experience, Adam, freely taste,

And fear of death deliver to the winds.

So saying, she embrac'd him, and for joy 990
 Tenderly wept; much won, that he his love

Had so innobled, as of choice t' incur
 Divine displeasure for her sake, or death.

Ir recompense, for such compliance bad
 Such recompense best merits, from the bough 995

She gave him of that fair inticing fruit
 With liberal hand: he scrupl'd not to eat,

Against his better knowledge; not deceiv'd,
 But fondly overcome with female charm.

Earth trembl'd from her entrails, as again 1000
 In pangs, and Nature gave a second groan.

Sky lour'd, and muttering thunder, some sad drops
 Wept, at compleating of the mortal sin.

Original! while Adam took no thought,
 Eating his fill; nor Eve to iterate 1005

Her former trespass fear'd; the more to sooth
 Him,

Him, with her lov'd society: that now,
 As with new wine intoxicated both,
 They swim in mirth, and fancy that they feel
 Divinity within them breeding wings, 1010
 Wherewith to scorn the earth. But that false fruit
 Far other operation first display'd,
 Carnal desire inflaming: he on Eve
 Began to cast lascivious eyes; she him
 As wantonly repaid; in lust they burn: 1015
 Till Adam thus 'gan Eve to dalliance move.

Eve, now I see thou art exact of taste,
 And elegant, of sapience no small part;
 Since to each meaning favor we apply,
 And palate call judicious: I the praise 1020
 Yield thee, so well this day thou hast purvey'd.
 Much pleasure we have lost, while we abstain'd
 From this delightful fruit, nor known till now
 True relish, tasting: if such pleasure be
 In things to us forbidd'n, it might be wish'd, 1025
 For this one tree had been forbidden ten.
 But come, so well refresh'd, now let us play,
 As meet is, after such delicious fare:
 For never did thy beauty since the day
 I saw thee first, and wedded thee, adorn'd 1030
 With all perfections, so inflame my sense
 With ardor to enjoy thee; fairer now
 Than ever, bounty of this virtuous tree!

So said he, and forbore not glance, or toy
 Of amorous intent; well understood 1035
 Of Eve, whose eye darted contagious fire.
 Her hand he fair'd and to a shady bank,
 Thick over-head with verdant roof imbower'd,
 He led her nothing loath: flowr's were the couch,
 Panfies, and violets, and asphodel, 1040
 And hyacinth, earth's freshest softest lap.
 There they their fill of love, and love's disport
 Took largely; of their mutual guilt the seal,
 The solace of their sin; till dewy sleep

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Oppress'd them, wearied with their amorous play. 1045

Soon as the force of that fallacious fruit,

That with exhilarating vapor bland

About their spirits had play'd, and inmost pow'rs

Made err, was now exhal'd; and grosser sleep,

Bred of unkindly fumes, with conscious dreams 1050

Incumber'd, now had left them; up they rose

As from unrest, and each the other viewing,

Soon found their eyes how open'd, and their minds

How darken'd! Innocence, that, as a veil

Had shadow'd them from knowing ill, was gone: 1055

Just confidence, and native righteousness

And honor from about them, naked left

To guilty shame: he cover'd, but his robe

Uncover'd more. So rose the Danite strong,

Herculean Sampson, from the harlot-lap 1060

Of Philistean Dalilah, and wak'd

Shorn of his strength. They, destitute, and bare

Of all their virtue: silent, and in face

Confounded, long they sat, as stricken mute:

Till Adam, though no less than Eve abash'd, 1065

At length gave utterance to these words constrain'd.

O Eve! in evil hour thou didst give ear

To that false worm, of whomsoever taught

To counterfeit man's voice; true in our fall,

False in our promis'd rising: since our eyes 1070

Open'd we find indeed, and find we know

Both Good and Evil; Good lost, and Evil got.

Bad fruit of knowledge, if this be to know,

Which leaves us naked thus, of honour void,

Of innocence, of faith, of purity, 1075

Our wonted ornaments, now soil'd and stain'd!

And in our faces evidend the signs

Of foul concupiscence; whence evil store;

Ev'n shame, the last of evils; of the first

Be sure then. — How shall I behold the face 1080

Henceforth of God or Angel, erst with joy

And rapture so oft beheld? those heav'nly shapes

Will dazzle now this earthly with their blaze
 Insufferably bright. O, might I here
 In solitude live savage, in some glade 1085
 Obscur'd, where highest woods impenetrable
 To star or sun-light, spread their umbrage broad
 And brown as evening! Cover me, ye Pines!
 Ye Cedars, with innumerable boughs
 Hide me, where I may never see them more! 1090
 But let us now, as in bad plight, devise
 What best may for the present serve to hide
 The parts of each from other, that seem most
 To shame obnoxious, and unseemliest seen:
 Some tree, whose smooth leaves together sow'd,
 And girded on our loins, may cover round
 Those middle parts, that this new comer, Shame,
 There sit not, and reproach us as unclean.

So counsel'd he, and both together went
 Into the thickest wood; there soon they chose 1100
 The Fig-tree, not that kind for fruit renown'd;
 But such as at this day, to Indians known
 In Malabar, or Decan, spreads her arms
 Branching so broad and long, that in the ground
 The bended twigs take root, and daughters grow 1105
 About the mother tree, a pillar'd shade
 High over-arch'd, and echoing walks between:
 There oft the Indian herdsman shunning heat
 Selters in cool, and tends his pasturing herds
 At loopholes cut thro' thickest shade: those leaves
 They gather'd, broad as Amazonian targe,
 And with what skill they had, together sow'd,
 To gird their waist; vain covering, if to hide
 Their guilt, and dreaded shame! O, how unlike
 To that first naked glory! such of late 1115
 Columbus found th' American, so girt
 With feather'd cincture; naked else, and wild
 Among the trees, on isles and woody shores.
 Thus fenc'd, and, as they thought, their shame in part
 Cover'd; but not at rest or ease of mind. 1120

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They sat them down to weep! nor only tears
 Rain'd at their eyes; but high winds worse within
 Began to rise, high passions, anger, hate,
 Mistrust, suspicion, discord, and shook fore
 Their inward state of mind; calm region once 1125
 And full of peace; now tost and turbulent!
 For understanding rul'd not, and the will
 Heard not her lore; but in subjection now
 To sensual appetite, who from beneath
 Usurping, over sov'reign reason claim'd 1130
 Superior sway: from thus distemper'd breast
 Adam estrang'd in look and alter'd style,
 Speech intermitted thus to Eve renew'd.

Would thou hadst hearken'd to my words, and stay'd
 With me, as I besought thee, when that strange 1135
 Desire of wandring this unhappy morn,
 I know not whence possess'd thee! We had then
 Remain'd still happy; not, as now, despoil'd
 Of all our good, sham'd, naked, miserable.
 Let none henceforth seek needless cause t' approve
 The faith they owe; when earnestly they seek
 Such proof, conclude, they then begin to fail.

To whom, soon mov'd with touch of blame, thus Eve:
 What words have pass'd thy lips, Adam severe!
 Imput'st thou that to my default, or will 1145
 Of wand'ring, as thou call'st it, which who knows
 But might as ill have happen'd thou being by;
 Or to thyself perhaps: hadst thou been there,
 Or here th' attempt, thou could'st not have discern'd
 Fraud in the serpent, speaking as he spake; 1150
 No ground of enmity between us known,
 Why he should mean me ill, or seek to harm.
 Was I to have never parted from thy side?
 As good have grown there still a lifeless rib.
 Being as I am, why didst not thou, the Head, 1155
 Command me absolutely not to go,
 Going into such danger, as thou said'st?
 Too facil then, thou didst not much gainsay,

Nay didst permit, approve, and fair dismiss.
 Hadst thou been firm, and fix'd in thy dissent, 1160
 Neither had I transgress'd, nor thou with me.

To whom then first incens'd Adam reply'd:
 Is this the love, is this the recompense
 Of mine to thee, ingrateful Eve! express'd
 Immutable, when thou wert lost, not I; 1165
 Who might have liv'd, and joy'd immortal bliss:
 Yet willingly chose rather death with thee.

And am I now upbraided, as the cause
 Of thy transgressing? Not enough severe,
 It seems, in my restraint! What could I more? 1170
 I warn'd thee; I admonish'd thee; foretold

The danger, and the lurking enemy
 That lay in wait: beyond this had been force;
 And force upon free will hath here no place.
 But confidence then bore thee on; secure 1175

Either to meet no danger, or to find
 Matter of glorious trial: and perhaps
 I also err'd, in overmuch admiring
 What seem'd in thee so perfect, that I thought
 No evil durst attempt thee: but I rue 1180

That error now, which is become my crime;
 And thou th' accuser! Thus it shall befall
 Him, who to worth in woman overtrusting,
 Lets her will rule: restraint she will not brook;
 And left to herself, if evil thence ensue, 1185
 She first his weak indulgence will accuse.——

Thus they in mutual accusation spent
 The fruitless hours; but neither self-condemning:
 And of their vain contest appear'd no end.

The End of the Ninth Book.

B O O K X.

Mean while the hainous and despiteful act
 Of Satan, done in Paradise, and how
 He, in the serpent had perverted Eve,

Her

Her husband she, to taste the fatal fruit,
 Was known in Heav'n: for what can 'scape the eye
 Of God all-seeing, or deceive his heart
 Omniscient? Who, in all things wise and just,
 Hinder'd not Satan to attempt the mind
 Of man, with strength entire, and free-will arm'd
 Complete to have discover'd and repuls'd
 Whatever whiles of foe or seeming friend:
 For still they knew, and ought t' have still remember'd,
 The high injunction, not to taste that fruit,
 Whoever tempted: which they not obeying,
 Incurr'd, what could they less? the penalty,
 And manifold in sin, deserv'd to fall.

Up into Heav'n from Paradise in haste
 Th' Angelic Guards ascended, mute and sad
 For man; for of his state by this they knew:
 Much wond'ring how the subtle fiend had stol'n
 Entrance unseen. Soon as th' unwelcome news
 From earth arriv'd at Heaven gate, displeas'd
 All were who heard: dim sadness did not spare
 That time celestial visages; yet mix'd
 With pity, violated not their bliss.
 About the new-arriv'd, in multitudes
 Th' ethereal people ran, to hear and know
 How all befel: they towards the Throne supreme
 Accountable made haste to make appear
 With righteous plea their utmost vigilance;
 And easily approv'd: when the Most High
 Eternal Father, from his secret cloud
 Amidst, in thunder utter'd thus his voice.

Assembled Angels, and ye Pow'rs return'd
 From unsuccessful charge! be not dismay'd,
 Nor troubl'd at these tidings from the earth,
 Which your sincerest care could not prevent,
 Foretold so lately what would come to pass,
 When first this tempter cross'd the gulf from Hell.
 I told you then he should prevail, and speed
 On his bad errand; Man should be seduc'd,

And flatter'd out of all, believing lies
 Against his Maker: no decree of mine
 Concurring to necessitate his fall,
 Or touch with lightest moment of impulse 45
 His free will, to her own inclining left
 In even scale. But fall'n he is: and now
 What rests, but that the mortal Sentence pass
 On his transgression, death denounc'd that day;
 Which he presumes already vain and void, 50
 Because not yet inflict'd, as he fear'd,
 By some immediate stroke: but soon shall find
 Forbearance no acquittance e're day end.
 Justice shall not return, as bounty, scorn'd.
 But whom send I to judge them? whom, but thee 55
 Vicegerent Son? To thee I have transferr'd
 All judgment, whether in Heav'n, or Earth, or Hell,
 Easy it may be seen that I intend
 Mercy colleague with justice, sending thee,
 Man's friend, his mediator, his design'd 60
 Both ransom and redeemer voluntary;
 And destin'd man himself, to judge man fall'n.
 So spake the Father, and unfolding bright
 Tow'rd the right hand his Glory, on the Son
 Blaz'd forth unclouded Deity: He full 65
 Resplendent all his Father manifest
 Express'd, and thus divinely answer'd mild.
 Father Eternal! Thine is to decree;
 Mine both in Heav'n and Earth to do thy will
 Supreme; that thou in me thy Son belov'd 70
 Mayst ever rest well pleas'd. I go to judge
 On earth these thy transgressors; but thou know'st,
 Whoever judg'd, the worst on me must light,
 When time shall be; for so I undertook
 Before thee; and not repenting, this obtain 75
 Of right, that I may mitigate their doom
 On me deriv'd: yet I shall temper so
 Justice with Mercy, as may illustrate most
 Them fully satisfy'd, and thee appease.

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Attendance none shall need, nor train, where none 80
Are to behold the judgment, but the judg'd, yet
Those two: the third best absent, is condemn'd; till now
45 Convict by flight, and rebel to all laws, till now
Conviction to the serpent none belongs, till now

Thus saying, from his radiant seat he rose 85
Of high collateral glory: Him Thrones, and Powers,
Princedom, and Dominations ministrant,
50 Accompanied to Heaven-gate: from whence
Eden, and all the coast in prospect lay.

Down he descended straight: the speed of Gods 90
Time counts not, tho' with swiftest minutes wing'd.
Now was the Sun in western cadence low
e 55 From noon; and gentle airs, due at their hour,
To fan the earth now wak'd, and usher in

Hell, The evening cool; when he, from wrath more cool, 95
Came, the mild Judge, and Intercessor both,
To sentence man: the voice of God they heard,

60 Now walking in the garden, by soft winds,
Brought to their ears, while day declin'd: they heard,
And from his presence hid themselves, among
The thickest trees, both man and wife: till God, 100
Approaching, thus to Adam call'd aloud.

65 Where art thou Adam, went with joy to meet
My coming seen far off? I miss thee here,
Not pleas'd; thus entertain'd with solitude,
Where obvious duty e're-while appear'd unfought:
Or come I less conspicuous? Or what change

70 Absents thee? Or what change detains? Come forth:
He came, and with him Eve, more loth, tho' first

To offend; discountenanc'd both, and discompos'd: 110
Love was not in their looks, neither to God
Or to each other; but apparent guilt,

75 And shame, and perturbation; and despair,
Anger, and obstinacy, and hate; and guile:
Whence Adam, fault'ring long, thus answer'd brief 115

I heard thee in the garden, and of thy voice
Afraid, being naked, hid myself.— To whom

The gracious Judge without revile reply'd.

My voice thou oft hast heard, and hast not fear'd,
But still rejoic'd: how is it now become 120

So dreadful to thee? That thou art naked, who
Hath told thee? Hast thou eaten of the tree,
Whereof I gave thee charge thou shouldst not eat?

To whom thus Adam sore beset reply'd,
O Heav'n! in evil strait this day I stand 125

Before my Judge, either to undergo

Myself the total crime or to accuse

My other self, the partner of my life:

Whose failing, while her faith to me remains,
I should conceal, and not expose to blame 130

By my complaint. But strict necessity

Subdues me, and calamitous constraint!

Left on my head both sin and punishment,

However insupportable, be all

Devolv'd. Though should I hold my peace, yet thou
Wouldst easily detect what I conceal —

This Woman, whom thou mad'st to be my help,

And gav'st me as thy perfect gift, so good,

So fit, so acceptable, so divine,

That from her hand I could suspect no ill; 140

And what she did, whatever in itself,

Her doing seem'd to justify the deed;

She gave me of the tree, — and I did eat.

To whom the Sov'reign Presence thus reply'd.

Was she thy God, that her thou didst obey 145

Before his voice? Or was she made thy guide,

Superior, or but equal; that to her

Thou didst resign thy manhood, and the place

Wherein God set thee above her, made of thee; 150

And for thee; whose perfection far excell'd

Hers in all real dignity? Adorn'd

She was indeed, and lovely to attract

Thy love; not thy subjection: and her gifts

Were such, as under government well-seem'd;

Unseemly to bear rule, which was thy part, 155

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And person, hadst thou known thyself aright.

So having said, he thus to Eve in few:

Say, woman, what is this which thou hast done?

To whom sad Eve, with shame nigh overwhelm'd,
Confessing soon; yet not bevore her Judge 160

Bold, or loquacious, thus abash'd reply'd.—

The serpent me beguil'd, and I did eat!

Which when the Lord God heard, without delay

To judgment He proceeded on th' accus'd 165

Serpent though brute; unable to transfer

The guilt on him, who made him instrument

Of mischief, and polluted from the end

Of his creation; justly then accurs'd,

As vitiated in nature. More to know

Concern'd not man, since he no further knew, 170

Nor alter'd his offence; yet God at last

To Satan first in sin his doom apply'd,

Though in mysterious terms, judg'd as then best:

And on the Serpent thus his curse let fall.

Because thou hast done this, thou art accurst 175

Above all cattle, each beast of the field;

Upon thy belly groveling thou shalt go;

And dust shalt eat, all the days of thy life:

Between thee and the woman I will put

Enmity; and between thine and her seed: 180

Her seed shall bruise thy head; thou bruise his heel.

So spake this oracle, then verify'd

When Jesus son of Mary, second Eve,

Saw Satan fall, like lightning, down from Heav'n,

Prince of the air: then rising from his grave 185

Spoil'd Principalities and Pow'rs, triumph'd

In open shew; and, with ascension bright,

Captivity led captive through the air,

The realm itself of Satan, long usurp'd;

Whom He shall tread at last under our feet: 190

Ev'n He who now foretold his fatal bruise;

And to the woman thus his sentence turn'd.

Thy sorrow I will greatly multiply

By thy conception; children thou shalt bring
In sorrow forth; and to thy husband's will 195
Thine shall submit: he over thee shall rule.

On Adam last thus judgment he pronounc'd:
Because thou hast hearken'd to the voice of thy wife,
And eaten of the tree, concerning which
I charg'd thee, saying, thou shalt not eat thereof: 200
Curs'd is the ground for thy sake: thou in sorrow
Shalt eat thereof all the days of thy life:
Thorns also and thistles it shall bring thee forth
Unbid; and thou shalt eat th' herb of the field,
In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, 205
Till thou return unto the ground; for thou
Out of the ground wast taken, know thy birth,
For dust thou art, and shalt to dust return.

So judg'd he Man, both Judge and Saviour sent;
And th' instant stroke of Death, denunc'd that day, 210
Remov'd far off: then, pitying how they stood
Before him naked to the air, that now
Must suffer change, disdain'd not to begin
Thenceforth the form of servant to assume:
As when he wash'd his servants feet; so now 215
As father of his family he clad
Their nakedness with skins of beasts; or slain,
Or, as the snake, with youthful coat repaid:
And thought not much to clothe his enemies.
Nor he their outward only, with the skins 220
Of beasts, but inward nakedness, much more
Opprobrious; with his robe of righteousness
Arraying cover'd from his Father's sight.
To him with swift ascent he up return'd,
Into his blissful bosom reassum'd 225
In glory as of old; to him appeas'd
All, tho' all-knowing, what had past with man
Recounted; mixing intercession sweet.

Mean while, ere thus was sinn'd and judg'd on earth,
Within the gates of Hell sat Sin and Death, 230
In counterview within the gates, that now

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Stood open wide, belching outrageous flame
Far into Chæos, since the Fiend past through,
Sin opening: who thus now to Death began.

O son! why sit we here each other viewing 235

Idly, while Satan our great author thrives
In other worlds, and happier seat provides

For us his offspring dear? It cannot be

But that success attends him: if mishap,

Ere this he had return'd, with fury driven 240

By his avengers, since no place like this

Can fit his punishment, or their revenge.

Methinks I feel new strength within me rise,

Wings growing, and dominion giv'n me large

Beyond this deep: whatever draws me on, 245

Or sympathy, or some connatural force,

Pow'rful at greatest distance to unite

With secret amity things of like kind

By secretest conveyance. Thou, my shade

Inseparable, must with me along: 250

For Death from Sin no pow'r can separate.

But lest the difficulty of passing back,

Stay his return perhaps over this gulf

Impassable, impervious; let us try

Advent'rous work, yet to thy pow'r and mine 255

Not unagreeable, to found a path

Over this main from Hell to that new world,

Where Satan now prevails, a monument

Of merit high to all th' infernal host;

Easing their passage hence, for intercourse, 260

Or transmigration, as their lot shall lead.

Nor can I miss the way, so strongly drawn

By this new felt attraction and instinct.

Whom thus the meager Shadow answer'd soon,

Go whither fate and inclination strong 265

Leads thee; I shall not lag behind, nor err

The way, thou leading, such a scent I draw

Of carnage, prey innumerable, and taste

The favor of Death from all things there that live.

Nor

Nor shall I to the work thou enterprisest
Be wanting, but afford thee equal aid. 270

So saying, with delight he snuff'd the smell
Of mortal change on earth. As when a flock
Of ravenous fowl, though many a league remote,
Against the day of battel, to a field, 275

Where armies lie incamp'd, come flying, lur'd
With scent of living carcases, design'd
For death the following day, in bloody fight:
So scented the grim Feature, and upturn'd
His nostrils wide into the murky air, 280
Sagacious of his quarry from so far.

Then both from out Hell-gates; into the waste
Wide anarchy of Chaos, damp and dark,
Flew diverse, and with pow'r, their pow'r was great,
Hovering upon the waters, what they met 285
Solid or slimy, as in raging sea

Toft up and down, together crowded drove
From each side shoaling towards the mouth of Hell:
As when two polar winds, blowing adverse
Upon the Cronian sea, together drive 290

Mountains of ice, that stop th' imagin'd way
Beyond Petfora eastward, to the rich
Cæthæian coast. The aggregated foil
Death with his mace petrific, cold and dry,
As with a trident smote; and fix'd as firm 295

As Delos floating once: the rest his look
Bound with Gorgonian rigor not to move:
And with Asphaltic slime, broad as the gate,
Deep to the roots of Hell the gather'd beach
They fasten'd; and the mole immense wrought on 300
Over the foaming deep high arch'd; a bridge,
Of length prodigious, joining to the wall
Immoveable of this now fenceless world,
Forfeit to Death. From hence a passage broad,
Smooth, easy, inoffensive, down to Hell. 305

So, if great things to small may be compar'd,
Xerxes, the Liberty of Grece to yoke.

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270 From Sufa, his Memnonian palace high,
 Came to the sea; and over Hellespont
 Bridging his way, Europe with Asia join'd; 310
 And scourg'd with many a stroke th' indignant waves.
 Now had they brought the work, by wondrous art
 Pontifical, a ridge of pendent rock
 275 Over the vex'd Abyfs, following the track
 Of Satan, to the self-same place where he 315
 First lighted from his wing, and landed safe
 From out of Chaos to the outside bare
 280 Of this round world: with pins of adamant
 And chains they made all fast; too fast they made,
 And durable: And now in little space 320
 The confines met of empyréan Heav'n
 And of this world, and on the left hand hell,
 With long reach interpos'd: three sev'ral ways
 In sight, to each of these three places led.
 And now their way to earth they had descry'd 325
 To Paradise first tending; when, behold!
 Satan, in likeness of an Angel bright,
 Betwixt the Centaur and the Scorpion steering
 His zenith, while the Sun in Aries rose:
 Disguis'd he came; but those his children dear 330
 Their parent soon discern'd, though in disguise.
 He, after Eve seduc'd, unminded slunk
 Into the wood fast by; and changing shape
 295 T' observe the sequel, saw his guileful act
 By Eve, though all unweeting, seconded 335
 Upon her husband; saw their shame, that fought
 Vain covertures: but when he saw descend
 300 The Son of God to judge them, terrify'd
 He fled; not hoping to escape, but shunn'd
 The present; fearing guilty what his wrath 340
 Might suddenly inflict: that past, return'd
 By night, and listening where the hapless pair
 305 Sat in their sad discourse, and various plaint,
 Thence gather'd his own doom: which understood
 Not instant, but of future time, with joy 345
 And

And tidings fraught, to Hell he now return'd:
 And at the brink of Chaos, near the foot
 Of this new wondrous pontifice, unhop'd
 Met, who to meet him came, his offspring dear.
 Great joy was at their meeting, and at sight 350
 Of that stupendous bridge his joy increas'd.
 Long he admiring stood, till Sin, his fair
 Inchanting daughter, thus the silence broke.

O parent! these are thy magnific deeds,
 Thy trophies, which thou view'st as not thine own;
 Thou art their author, and prime architect.
 For I no sooner in my heart divin'd,
 My heart, which by a secret harmony
 Still moves with thine, join'd in connexion sweet,
 That thou on earth hadst prosper'd, which thy looks
 Now also evidencē, but straight I felt,
 Though distant from thee worlds between, yet felt
 That I must after thee with this thy son:
 Such fatal consequence unites us three!
 Hell could no longer hold us in her bounds; 365
 Nor this unvoyageable gulf obscure,
 Detain from following thy illustrious track.
 Thou hast atchiev'd our liberty, confin'd
 Within Hell gates till now: Thou us impower'd
 To fortify thus far, and over-lay 370
 With this portentous bridge the dark Abyss.
 Thine now is all this world; thy virtue hath won
 What thy hands builded not: thy wisdom gain'd,
 With odds what war hath lost: and fully aveng'd
 Our foil in Heav'n: here thou shalt Monarch reign, 375
 There didst not: there let him still victor sway,
 As battel hath adjudg'd, from this new world
 Retiring, by his own doom alienated:
 And henceforth Monarchy with thee divide
 Of all things, parted by th' empyreal bounds, 380
 His quadrature, from thy orbicular world;
 Or try thee now more dang'rous to his throne.
 Whom thus the Prince of darkness answer'd glad.

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Fair Daughter, and thou Son and Grandchild both!
 High proof ye now have giv'n to be the race 385
 Of Satan, for I glory in the name,
 Antagonist of Heav'n's Almighty King,
 Amply have merited of me, of all
 Th' infernal empire, that, so near Heav'n's door
 Triumphal with triumphal act have met, 390
 Mine with this glorious work; and made one realm
 Hell and this world, our realm, one continent
 Of easy thorough-fare. Therefore while I
 Descend through darkness, on your road with ease,
 To my associate Pow'rs, them to acquaint 395
 With these successes, and with them rejoice,
 You two this way, among these numerous Orbs,
 All yours! right down to Paradise descend:
 There dwell and reign in bliss; thence on the earth
 Dominion exercise, and in the air, 400
 Chiefly on Man, sole Lord of all declar'd:
 Him first make sure your thrall, and lastly kill.
 My substitutes I send you, and create
 Plenipotent on earth, of matchless might
 Issuing from me: on your joint vigor now 405
 My hold of this new kingdom all depends;
 Through sin to death expos'd by my exploit.
 If your joint pow'r prevail, th' affairs of hell
 No detriment need fear; go and be strong.
 So saying he dismiss'd them; they with speed 410
 Their course through thickest constellations held,
 Spreading their bane: the blasted stars look'd wan,
 And Planets, planet-struck, real Eclipse
 Then suffer'd. Th' other way, Satan went down
 The cauey to Hell gate: on either side, 415
 Disparted Chaos over built exclaim'd,
 And with rebounding surge the bars assai'd,
 That scorn'd his indignation. Through the gate,
 Wide-open and unguarded, Satan pass'd,
 And all about found desolate: for those 420
 Appointed to sit there, had left their charge,
 Fair

Flown

Flown to the upper world: the rest were all
 Far to th' inland retir'd, about the walls
 Of Pandaemonium, city and proud seat
 Of Lucifer, so by allusion call'd, 425
 Of that bright star to Satan paragon'd.
 There kept their watch the legions, while the Grand
 In council sat, solicitous what chance
 Might intercept their Emperor sent: so he
 Departing gave command, and they observ'd 430
 As when the Tartar from his Russian foe
 By Astracan over the snowy plains,
 Retires: or Bactrian Sophy from de horns
 Of Turkish crescent, leaves all waste beyond
 The realm of Aladule, in his retreat 435
 To Taurus, or Casbeen: so these, the late
 Heav'n-banish'd host, left desert utmost Hell
 Many a dark league, reduc'd in careful watch
 Round their Metropolis; and now expecting
 Each hour their great adventurer from the search 440
 Of foreign worlds: he through the midst unmark'd,
 In shew plebeian Angel militant
 Of lowest order, past; and from the door
 Of that Plutonian hall, invisible
 Ascended his high throne; which under state 445
 Of richest texture spread, at th' upper end
 Was plac'd in regal lustre. Down a while
 He sat, and round about him saw unseen.
 At last as from a cloud his fulgent head
 And shape star-bright appear'd, or brighter, clad 450
 With what permissive glory since his fall
 Was left him, or false glitter: all amaz'd
 At that so sudden blaze, the Stygian throng
 Bent their aspect, and whom they wish'd beheld,
 Their mighty Chief return'd: loud was th' acclame!
 Forth rush'd in haste the great consulting Peers,
 Rais'd from their dark Divan, and with like joy
 Congratulant approach'd him, who with hand
 Silence, and with these words attention won.

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Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Pow'rs!
 For in possession such, not only of right, 461
 I call you and declare you now; return'd
 Successful beyond hope, to lead you forth
 Triumphant out of this infernal pit
 Abominable, accurs'd, the house of woe, 465
 And dungeon of our tyrant! now possess,
 As Lords, a spacious world, t' our native Heav'n
 Little inferior, by my adventure hard
 With peril great achiev'd. Long were to tell
 What I have done, what suffer'd, with what pain 470
 Voyag'd th' unreal, vast, unbounded deep
 Of horrible confusion! over which
 By Sin and Death a broad way now is pav'd
 To expedite your glorious march: but I
 Toild out my uncouth passage, forc'd to ride 475
 Th' untractable abyfs, plung'd in the womb
 Of unoriginal Night and Chaos wild:
 That jealous of their secrets fiercely oppos'd
 My journey strange, with clamorous uproar
 Protesting fate supreme: thence, how I found 480
 The new created world, which fame in Heav'n
 Long had foretold, a fabric wonderful
 Of absolute perfection: therein Man,
 Plac'd in a Paradise, by our exile
 Made happy: him by fraud I have seduc'd 485
 From his Creator; and the more t' increase
 Your wonder, with an apple; he thereat
 Offended, worth your laughter, hath giv'n up
 Both his beloved Man and all his world,
 To Sin and Death a prey, and so to us, 490
 Without our hazard, labor, or alarm:
 To range in, and to dwell, and over man
 To rule, as over all he should have rul'd.
 True is, me also he hath judg'd, or rather
 Me not, but the brute serpent in whose shape 495
 Man I deceiv'd, that which to me belongs,
 Is enmity, which he will put between

Me and mankind; I am to bruise his heel;
 His seed, when is not set, shall bruise my head.
 A world who would not purchase with a bruise, 500
 Or much more grievous pain? Ye have th' account
 Of my performance: What remains, ye Gods,
 But up and enter now into full bliss?—

So having said, a while he stood, expecting
 Their universal shout and high applause 505
 To fill his ear: when contrary, he hears
 On all sides, from innumerable tongues,
 A dismal universal hiss, the sound
 Of public scorn: he wonder'd, but not long
 Had leisure, wond'ring at himself now more: 510
 His visage drawn he felt to sharp and spare;
 His arms clung to his ribs; his legs entwining
 Each other, till supplanted down he fell
 A monstrous serpent on his belly prone,
 Reluctant; but in vain, a greater pow'r 515
 Now rul'd him, punish'd in the shape he sinn'd
 According to his doom. He would have spoke,
 But hiss for his return'd with forked tongue,
 To forked tongue; for now were all transform'd
 Alike, to serpents all as accessories 520
 To his bold riot: dreadful was the din
 Of hissing through the hall, thick swarming now
 With complicated monsters head and tail,
 Scorpion, and Asp, and Amphisbaena dire,
 Ceraustes horn'd, Hydrus, and Elops drear, 525
 And Dipfas, not so thick swarm'd once the soil
 Bedropt with blood of Gorgon; or the isle
 Ophiusa, but still greatest he the midst,
 Now Dragon grown, larger than whom the sun
 Ingender'd in the Pythian vale on slime, 530
 Huge Python! and his pow'r no less he seem'd
 Above the rest still to retain: they all
 Him follow'd, issuing forth to th' open field,
 Where all yet left of that revolted rout,
 Heav'n-fall'n, in station stood or just array, 535

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Sublime with expectation when to see
 In triumph issuing forth their glorious chief:
 They saw, but other sight instead! a crowd
 Of ugly serpents: horror on them fell,
 And horrid sympathy: for what they saw, 540
 They felt themselves now changing: down their arms,
 Down fell both spear and shield; down they as fast,
 And the dire hiss renew'd, and the dire form
 Catch'd by contagion, like in punishment,
 As in their crime. Thus was th' applause they meant,
 Turn'd to exploding hiss, triumph to shame
 Cast on themselves from their own mouths. There stood
 A grove hard by, sprung up with this their change,
 His will who reigns above, to aggravate
 Their penance, laden with fair fruit, like that 550
 Which grew in Paradise, the bait of Eve
 Us'd by the tempter: on that prospect strange
 Their earnest eyes they fix'd; imagining
 For one forbidden tree, a multitude
 Now ris'n, to work them further woe or shame: 555
 Yet parch'd with scalding thirst and hunger fierce,
 Though to delude them sent, could not abstain,
 But on they roll'd in heaps, and up the trees
 Climbing, fat thicker than the snaky locks
 That curl'd Megaera: greedily they pluck'd 560
 The fruitage fair to sight, like that which grew
 Near that bituminous lake where Sodom flam'd;
 This, more delusive, not the touch, but taste
 Deceiv'd; they fondly thinking to allay
 Their appetite with gust, instead of fruit 565
 Chew'd bitter ashes, which th' offended taste
 With spattering noise rejected: oft they assay'd,
 Hunger and thirst constraining; drug'd as oft
 With hatefullest disrelish, writh'd their jaws
 With soot and cinders fill'd: so oft they fell 570
 Into the same illusion; not as man, (plagu'd
 Whom they triumph'd once laps'd. Thus were they
 And worn with famine, long and ceaseless hiss,

Till their lost shape, permitted, they resum'd:
 Yearly injoin'd, some say, to undergo 575
 This annual humbling certain number'd days,
 To dash their pride, and joy for man seduc'd.
 However some tradition they dispers'd
 Among the Heathen of their purchase got,
 And fabled how the serpent, whom they call'd 580
 Ophion with Eurynome, the wide
 Encroaching Eve perhaps, had first de rule
 Of high Olympus; thence by Saturn driv'n,
 And Ops, e're yet Diætan Jove was born.
 Mean while in Paradise the hellish pair 585
 Too soon arriv'd, Sin, there in pow'r before,
 Once actual; now in body, and to dwell
 Habitual habitant; behind her Death,
 Close following pace for pace, not mounted yet,
 On his pale horse: to whom Sin thus began. 590
 Second of Satan sprung, all conquering Death,
 What think'st thou of our empire now? Tho' earn'd
 With travel difficult, not better far
 Than still at Hell's dark threshold e' have sat watch,
 Unnam'd, undreaded, and thyself half starv'd? 595
 Whom thus the sin-born monster answer'd soon:
 To me, who with eternal famine pine,
 Alike, is Hell, or Paradise, or Heav'n;
 There best, where most with ravin I may meet:
 Which here, tho' plenteous, all too little seems 600
 To stuff this maw, this vast unhide-bound corps.
 To whom th' incestuous mother thus reply'd:
 Thou therefore on these herbs, and fruits, and flowers
 Feed first; on each beast next, and fish, and fowl;
 No homely morsels! and whatever thing 605
 The scithe of Time mowes down, devour unspar'd:
 Till I in man residing, through the race,
 His thoughts, his looks, words, actions all infect;
 And season him thy last and sweetest prey.
 This said, they both betook them several ways, 610
 Both to destroy; or unimmortal make

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575 All kinds; and for destruction to mature
Sooner or later: which th' Almighty seeing, banish
From his transcendent seat the Saints among,
To those bright Orders utter'd thus his voice. 615

See with what heat these dogs of hell advance

To waste and havock yonder world, which I

580 So fair and good created; and had still
Kept in that state, had not the folly of man

Let in these wasteful Furies; who impute

Folly to me: so doth the prince of Hell

And his adherents, that with so much ease

585 I suffer them to enter and possess
A place so heav'nly, and conniving seem

To gratify my scornful enemies,

That laugh, as if, transported with some fit,

Of passion, I to them had quitted all.

At random yielded up to their misrule:

590 And know not that I call'd and drew them thither,

My hell hounds, to lick up the draff and filth

Which man's polluting sin with saint hath shed

On what was pure, till cram'd and gorg'd, nigh burst,

With suck'd and glutted offal, at one sling

595 Of thy victorious arm, well-pleasing Son,
Both Sin, and Deach, and yawning Grave at last

Through Chaos hurl'd, obstruct the mouth of Hell

For ever, and seal up his ravenous jaws.

Then heav'n and earth renew'd, shall be made pure

To sanctity, that shall receive no stain:

600 Till then the curse pronounc'd on both precedes,

He ended, and the heav'nly audience loud

Sung Hallelujah, as the sound of seas,

Through multitude that sung! ..Just are thy ways,

605 ..Righteous are thy decrees on all thy works;

..Who can extenuate Thee? next, to the Son,

645 ..Destin'd restorer of mankind, by whom

..New heav'n and earth shall to the ages rise,

610 ..Or down from Heav'n descend." Such was their song,

While the Creator calling forth by name

His

His mighty Angels, gave them several charge, 650
 As sort'd, best with present things. The Sun
 Had first his precept so to move, so shine,
 As might affect the earth with cold, and heat,
 Scarce tolerable; and from the north to call
 Decrepit Winter; from the south to bring, 655
 Solstitial summer's heat. To the blanc moon
 Her office they prescrib'd; to th' other five
 Their planetary motions and aspects
 In Sextile, Square, and Trine, and Opposite,
 Of noxious efficacy; and when to join 660
 In synod unbenign: and taught the fix'd
 Their influence malignant when to show'r,
 Which of them rising with the Sun, or falling,
 Should prove tempestuous. To the winds they set
 Their corners; when with bluster to confound 665
 Sea, air, and shore: the thunder when to roll
 With terror through the dark aerial hall.
 Some say he bid his Angels turn ascense
 The Poles of earth twice ten degrees and more
 From the Sun's axle; they with labor push'd 670
 Oblique the centric globe: some say the Sun
 Was bid turn from th' equinoctial road
 Like distant breadth to Taurus with the sev'n
 Atlantic sisters, and the Spartan Twins
 Up to the Tropic Crab; thence down amain 675
 By Leo and the Virgin and the Scales,
 As deep as Capricorn, to bring in change
 Of seasons to each clime: else had the spring
 Perpetual smil'd on earth with vernant flowers,
 Equal in days and nights, except to those 680
 Beyond the Polar circles: to them day
 Had unbenighted shone, while the low Sun
 To recompense his distance, in their sight
 Had rounded still th' horizon, and not known
 Or east or west; which had forbid the snow 685
 From cold Estotiland; and south as far
 Beneath Magellan. At that tasted fruit

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650 The sun, as from Thyestean banquet, turn'd
 His course intended; else how had the world
 Inhabited, though sinless, more than now. 692
 Avoided pinching cold and scorching heat?
 These changes in the Heavn's, though slow, produc'd
 655 Like change on sea and land; sidereal blast,
 Vapor, and mist, and exhalation hot;
 Corrupt, and pestilent! Now from the north. 695
 Of Norumbega, and the Samoed shore,
 Bursting their brazen dungeon, arm'd with ice
 660 And snow and hail and stormy gust and flaw,
 Boreas and Caecias and Argestes loud
 And Thrafcias rend the woods and seas upturn: 700
 With adverse blast upturns them from the south
 Notus and Afer black with thundrous clouds
 665 From Sierra Liona: thwart of these as fierce
 Forth rush the Levant and the Pontent winds
 Eurus and Zephyr; with their lateral noise, 705
 Sirocco, and Libecchio. Thus began
 Outrage from lifeless things: but Discord first,
 670 Daughter of Sin, among th' irrational
 Death introduc'd through fierce antipathy:
 Beast now with beast'gan war, and fowl with fowl, 710
 And fish with fish: to graze the herb all leaving,
 Devour'd each other; nor stood much in awe
 675 Of man, but fled him, or with count'nance grim
 Glar'd on him passing. These were from without
 The growing miseries which Adam saw 715
 Already in part, though hid in gloomiest shade,
 To sorrow abandon'd, but worse felt within,
 680 And in a troubled sea of passion tost,
 Thus to disburden fought with sad complaint.
 O miserable of happy! is this the end 820
 Of this new glorious world, and me so late
 The glory of that glory, who now become
 Accurs'd of blessed? Hide me from the face
 685 Of God, whom to behold was then my height
 Of happiness! yet well, if here would end 825
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The misery; I deserv'd it, and would bear
 My own deservings; but this will not serve!
 All that I eat, or drink, or shall beget,
 Is propagated curse. O voice once heard
 Delightfully, *Increase and multiply*, 730
 Now death to hear! For what can I increase,
 Or multiply, but curses on my head?
 Who of all ages to succeed, but feeling
 The evil on him brought by me, will curse
 My head? Ill fare our ancestor impure! 735
 For this we may thank Adam! but his thanks
 Shall be the execration: so besides
 Mine own that bide upon me, all from me
 Shall with a fierce reflux on me redound:
 On me as on their natural centre light 740
 Heavy, though in their place. O fleeting joys
 Of Paradise, dear bought with lasting woes!
 Did I request thee, Maker, from my clay,
 To mold me man? Did I solicit thee
 From darkness to promote me, or here place 745
 In this delicious garden? As my will
 Concurr'd not to my being, it were but right
 And equal to reduce me to my dust,
 Desirous to resign and render back
 All I receiv'd; unable to perform 750
 Thy terms too hard, by which I was to hold
 The good I sought not. To the loss of that,
 Sufficient penalty, why hast thou added
 The sense of endless woes? Inexplicable
 Thy justice seems.—Yet, to say truth, too late 755
 I thus contest: then should have been refus'd
 Those terms whatever, when they were propos'd:
 Thou didst accept them; wilt thou enjoy the good,
 Then cavil the conditions? And though God
 Made thee without thy leave; what if thy son 760
 Prove disobedient, and reprov'd, retort,
 Wherefore didst thou beget me? I sought it not!
 Wouldst thou admit for his contempt of thee

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That proud excuse? Yet him, not thy election,
But natural necessity begot. 765

God made thee of choice his own, and of his own
To serve him; thy reward was of his grace,

Thy punishment then justly is at his will.
Be it so! for I submit; his doom is fair,

That dust I am, and shall to dust return: 770
O welcome hour whenever! Why delays,

His hand to execute, what his decree
Fix'd on this day? Why do I overlive?

Why am I mock'd with death, and lengthen'd out
To deathless pain? How gladly would I meet 775

Mortality my sentence, and be earth
Insensible! How glad would lay me down,

As in my mother's lap! There I should rest,
And sleep secure: His dreadful voice no more

Would thunder in my ears: no fear of worse 780
To me and to my offspring would torment me

With cruel expectation.——Yet one doubt
Pursues me still, lest all I cannot die;

Lest that pure breath of life, the spirit of man
Which God inspir'd, cannot together perish 785

With this corporeal clod: then, in the grave,
Or in some other dismal place, who knows

But I shall die a living death? O thought
Horrid, if true! Yet why? It was but breath

Of life that sinn'd: what dies but what had life 790
And sin? The body properly hath neither.

All of me then shall die; let this appease
The doubt, since human reach no further knows.

For though the Lord of all be infinite,
Is his wrath also? Be it! Man is not so, 795

But mortal doom'd. How can he exercise
Wrath without end on man whom death must end?

Can he make deathless death? That were to make
Strange contradiction, which to God himself

Impossible is held; as argument 800
Of weakness, not of pow'r. Will he draw out,

For anger's sake, finite to infinite,
 In punish'd man, to satisfy his rigor,
 Satisfy'd never? That where to extend
 His sentence beyond dust and nature's law: 805
 By which all causes else according still
 To the reception of their matter aft
 Not to th' extent of their own sphere. But say
 That Death be not one stroke, as I suppos'd,
 Bereaving sense: but endless misery 810
 From this day onward: which I feel begun
 Both in me, and without me, and so last
 To perpetuity.—Ay me! That fear
 Comes thund'ring back with dreadful revolution
 On my defenseless head: both Death and I 815
 Am found eternal, and incorporate both,
 Nor I on my part single, in me all
 Posterity stands curs'd! Fair patrimony
 That I must leave ye, sons; O were I able
 To waste it all myself, and leave ye none! 820
 So disinherited, how would you bless
 Me now your curse! Ah, why should all mankind
 For one man's fault thus guiltless be condemn'd,
 If guiltless? But from me what can proceed,
 But all corrupt, both mind and will deprav'd, 825
 No to do only, but to will the same
 With me? How can they then acquitted stand
 In sight of God? Him after all disputes
 Forc'd I absolve: all my evasions vain
 And reasonings, though thro' mazes, lead me still 830
 But to my own conviction: first and last
 On me, me only, as the source and spring
 Of all corruption, all the blame lights due:
 So might the wrath. Fond wish! couldst thou support
 That burden heavier; than the earth to bear; 835
 Than all the world much heavier; though divided
 With that bad woman? Thus what thou desir'st
 And what thou fear'st, alike destroys all hope
 Of refuge; and concludes thee miserable,

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Beyond all past example, and future: 846
 To Satan only like both crime and doom.
 O Conscience! into what abyss of fears
 And horrors hast thou driv'n me? Out of which
 I find no way, from deep to deeper plung'd!

Thus Adam to himself lamented loud 845
 Through the still night, not now, as ere man fell,
 Wholesome and cool, and mild; but with black air
 Accompanied: with damps and dreadful gloom;
 Which to his evil conscience represented
 All things with double terror. On the ground 850
 Outstretch'd he lay, on the cold ground, and oft
 Curs'd his creation; Death as oft accus'd
 Of tardy execution, since denounc'd
 The day of his offence. Why comes not Death,
 Said he, with one thrice acceptable stroke, 855
 To end me? shall truth fail to keep her word,
 Justice divine not hasten to be just?
 But Death comes not at call, justice divine
 Mends not her slowest pace for prayers or cries.
 O woods, o fountains, ^{*)} hillocks, dales, and bow'rs!
 With other echo late I taught your shades
 To answer, and resound far other song! —
 Whom thus afflicted when sad Eve beheld,
 Desolate where she sat, approaching nigh,
 Soft words to his fierce passion she assay'd: 865
 But her with stern regard he thus repell'd.

Out of my sight, thou serpent! — That name best
 Befits thee with him leagu'd; thyself as false
 And hateful: nothing wants, but that thy shape,
 Like his, and color serpentine, may show 370
 Thy inward fraud; to warn all creatures from thee
 Henceforth; lest that too heav'nly form, pretended
 To hellish falsehood, snare them! But for thee
 I had persisted happy; had not thy pride
 And wand'ring vanity, when least was safe, 875
 Rejected my forewarning, and disdain'd

Not

^{*)} Perhaps it shou'd be, Hills, Rocks,

Not to be trusted; longing to be seen,
 Though by the Devil himself; him overweening
 To over-reach: but with the serpent meeting
 Fool'd and beguil'd, by him thou, I by thee 880
 To trust thee from my side; imagin'd wife,
 Constant, mature, proof against all assaults,
 And understood not all was but a show
 Rather than solid virtue; all but a rib
 Crooked by nature, bent, as now appears, 885
 More to the part sinister, from me drawn;
 Well if thrown out, as supernumerary
 To my just number found. O! why did God,
 Creator wise, that peopled highest Heav'n
 With spirits masculine, create at last 890
 This novelty on earth, this fair defect
 Of nature, and not fill the world at once
 With men as Angels without feminine,
 Or find some other way to generate
 Mankind? This mischief had not then befall'n, 895
 And more that shall befall: innumerable
 Disturbances on earth through female snares,
 And trait conjunction with this sex: for either
 He never shall find out fit mate; but such
 As some misfortune brings him, or mistake; 900
 Or whom he wishes most shall seldom gain
 Through her perverseness; but shall see her gain'd
 By a far worse: or if she love, withheld
 By parents; or his happiest choice too late
 Shall meet, already link'd and wedlock-bound 905
 To a fell adversary, his hate, or shame:
 Which infinite calamity shall cause
 To human life, and household peace confound.

He added not, and from her turn'd; But Eve
 Not so repuls'd, with tears that ceas'd not flowing, 910
 And tresses all disorder'd, at his feed
 Fell humble; and embracing them besought
 His peace, and thus proceeded in her plaint.

For sake me not thus, Adam! Witness Heav'n

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What love sincere, and reverence in my heart 915
 I bear thee, and unweeting have offended,
 Unhappily deceiv'd! thy suppliant
 I beg, and clasp thy knees; bereave me not,
 Whereon I live! thy gentle looks, thy aid,
 Thy counsel in this uttermost distress, 920
 My only strength and stay! Forlorn of thee,
 Whither shall I betake me, where subsist?
 While yet we live, scarce one short hour perhaps,
 Between us two let there be peace, both joining,
 As join'd in injuries, one enmity 925
 Against a foe by doom express assign'd us,
 That cruel serpent! On me exercise not
 Thy hatred for this misery befall'n:
 On me already lost! Me, than thyself
 More miserable! both have sinn'd; but thou 930
 Against God only; I against God, and thee:
 And to the place of judgment will return.
 There with my cries importune Heav'n, that all
 The sentence, from thy head remov'd, may light
 On me, sole cause to thee of all this woe, 935
 Me, me only, just object of his ire!

She ended weeping; and her lowly plight
 Immoveable till peace obtain'd from fault
 Acknowledg'd, and deplor'd, in Adam wrought
 Commiseration: soon his heart relented 940
 Towards her, his life so late and sole delight,
 Now at his feet submissive in distress!
 Creature so fair his reconciliation seeking,
 His counsel, whom she had displeas'd, his aid!
 As one disarm'd, his anger all he lost; 945
 And thus with peaceful words uprais'd her soon.

Unwary, and too desirous, as before,
 So now of what thou know'st not, who desir'st
 The punishment all on thyself! Alas!
 Bear thine own first; ill able to sustain 950
 His full wrath, whose thou feel'st as yet least part,
 And my displeasure bear'st so ill. If pray'st
 Could

Could alter high decrees, I to that place
 Would speed before thee, and be louder heard,
 That on my head all might be visited, 955
 Thy frailty and infirmer sex forgiv'n,
 To me committed and by me expos'd.
 But rise; let us no more contend, nor blame
 Each other; blam'd enough elsewhere! But strive
 In offices of love, how we may lighten 960
 Each other's burden, in our share of woe:
 Since this day's death denounc'd, if ought I see,
 Will prove no sudden but a slow-pac'd evil;
 A long day's dying to augment our pain,
 And to our seed, O hapless seed! deriv'd, 965
 To whom thus Eve, recov'ring heart, reply'd.
 Adam by sad experiment, I know
 How little weight my words with thee can find,
 Found so erroneous; thence by just event
 Found so unfortunate; nevertheless, 970
 Restor'd by thee, vile as I am, to place
 Of new acceptance, hopeful to regain
 Thy love, the sole contentment of my heart
 Living or dying, from thee I will not hide
 What thoughts in my unquiet breast are ris'n: 975
 Tending to some relief of our extremes,
 Or end, though sharp and sad, yet tolerable
 As in our evils, and of easier choice.
 If care of our descent perplex us most,
 Which must be born to certain woe, devour'd 980
 By Death at last; and miserable it is
 To be to others cause of misery,
 Our own begotten, and of our loins to bring
 Into this cursed world a woeful race;
 That after wretched life must be at last 985
 Food for so foul a monster: in thy pow'r
 It lies, yet e're conception to prevent
 The race unblest, to being yet unbegot.
 Childless thou art, childless remain: so Death
 Shall be deceiv'd his glut; and with us two 990
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Be forc'd to satisfy his rav'nous maw.
 But if thou judge it hard and difficult,
 955 Conversing, looking, loving, to abstain
 From love's due rites, nuptial embraces sweet,
 And with desire to languish without hope, 995
 Before the present object languishing
 With like desire, which would be misery,
 960 And torment less than none of what we dread;
 Then, both ourselves and seed at once to free
 From what we fear for both, let us make short, 1000
 Let us seek Death: or be not found, supply
 With our own hands his office on ourselves,
 965 Why stand we longer shivering under fears,
 That show no end but death; and have the pow'r
 Of many ways to die the shortest choosing 1005
 Destruction with destruction to destroy?—

She ended here, or vehement despair
 970 Broke off the rest: so much of death her thoughts
 Had entertain'd, as dy'd her cheeks with pale.
 But Adam, with such counsel nothing sway'd, 1010
 To better hopes his more attentive mind
 Lab'ring had rais'd; and thus to Eve reply'd.

Eve, thy contempt of life and pleasure seems
 To argue in thee something more sublime,
 And excellent than what thy mind contemns. 1015
 But self-destruction therefore sought, refutes
 That excellence thought in thee: and implies,
 980 Not thy contempt, but anguish and regret
 For loss of life and pleasure overlov'd.
 Or if thou covet death, as utmost end 1020
 Of misery; so thinking to evade
 The penalty pronounc'd; doubt not but God

Hath wiselier arm'd his vengeful ire, than so
 To be forestall'd: much more I fear lest death,
 So snatch'd will not exempt us from the pain 1025
 We are by doom to pay. Rather such acts
 Of contumacy will provoke the Highest
 To make death in us live! Then, let us seek

Some

Some safer resolution; which methinks
 I have in view, calling to mind with heed 1030
 Part of our sentence, that „*thy seed shall bruise*
 „*The Serpent's head*:“ Piteous amends! unless
 Be meant, whom I conjecture, our grand foe
 Satan: who in the Serpent hath contriv'd
 Against us this deceit: to crush his head 1035
 Would be revenge indeed, which will be lost
 By death brought on ourselves; or childless days
 Resolv'd, as thou propolest: so, our foe
 Shall 'scape his punishment ordain'd; and we
 Instead shall double ours upon our heads. 1040
 No more be mention'd then of violence
 Against ourselves; and wilful barrenness,
 That cuts us off from hope; and favors only
 Rancor and pride, impatience and despite,
 Reluctance against God, and his just yoke 1045
 Laid on our necks. Remember with what mild
 And gracious temper he both heard and judg'd
 Without wrath, or reviling: we expected
 Immediate dissolution, which we thought
 Was meant by death that day, when lo! to thee 1050
 Pains only in child-bearing were foretold,
 And bringing forth, soon recompens'd with joy,
 Fruit of thy womb: on me the curse aslope
 Glanc'd on the ground; with labor I must earn
 My bread: what harm? Idleness had been worse: 1055
 My labor will sustain me: and lest cold
 Or heat should injure us, his timely care
 Hath unbesought provided; and his hands
 Cloth'd us unworthy; pitying while he judg'd.
 How much more, if we pray him, will his ear 1060
 Be open, and his heart to pity incline,
 And teach us further by what means to shun
 Th' inclement seasons, rain, ice, hail and snow;
 Which now the sky with various face begins
 To shew us in this mountain; while the winds 1065
 Blow moist and keen, shattering the graceful locks

Of

Of those fair spreading trees; which bids us seek
 Some better shrowd, some better warmth to cherish
 Our limbs benumm'd; e're this diurnal star
 Leave cold the night, how we his gather'd beams 1070
 Reflected, may with matter fere toment
 Or by collision of two bodies grind
 The air attrite to fire; as late the clouds
 1035 Justling, or push'd with winds, rude in their shock
 Tine the slant lightning; whosethwar flame driv'n down,
 Kindles the gummy bark of Fir, and Pine,
 And sends a comfortable heat from far,
 Which might supply the Sun, Such fire to use,
 1040 And what may else be remedy or cure
 To evils which our own misdeeds have wrought, 1080
 He will instruct us praying, and of grace
 Beseeching him. So as we need not fear
 To pass commodiously this life, sustain'd
 1045 By him with many comforts; till we end
 In dust, our final rest, and native home. 1085
 What better can we do, than to the place
 Repairing where he judg'd us, prostrate fall
 Before him reverent; and there confess
 1050 Humbly our faults, and pardon beg; with tears
 Wat'ring the ground, and with our sighs the air 1090
 Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
 Of sorrow unfeign'd, and humiliation meek?
 Undoubtedly he will relent and turn
 1055 From his displeasure: in whose look serene,
 When angry most he seem'd and most severe, 1095
 What else but favor, grace, and mercy shone?
 So spake our father penitent: nor Eve
 1060 Felt less remorse. They forthwith to the place
 Repairing where he judg'd them, prostrate fell
 Before him reverent; and both confess'd 1100
 Humbly their faults; and pardon begg'd, with tears
 Wat'ring the ground; and with their sighs the air
 Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite; in sign
 1065 Of sorrow unfeign'd, and humiliation meek.

The End of the Tenth Book.

B O O K XI.

Thus they in lowliest plight repentant stood
 Praying; for from the mercy-seat above,
 Preventive grace descending, had remov'd
 The stony from their hearts, and made new flesh
 Regenerate grow instead; that sighs now breath'd 5
 Unutterable, which the spirit of pray'r
 Inspir'd, and wing'd for Heav'n with speedier flight
 Than loudest oratory. Yet their port
 Not of mean suitors; nor important less
 Seem'd their petition, than when th' ancient pair 10
 In fables old, less ancient yet than these
 Deucalion and chaste Pyrrha, to restore
 The race of mankind drown'd, before the shrine
 Of Themis stood devout. To Heav'n their pray'rs
 Flew up, nor miss'd the way, by envious winds 15
 Blown vagabond, or frustrate: in they pass'd
 Dimensionless thro' heav'nly doors; then clad
 With incense, where the golden altar fum'd,
 By their great Intercessor, came in sight
 Before the Father's throne: them the glad Son 20
 Presenting, thus to intercede began.

See, Father, what first fruits on earth are sprung
 From thy implanted grace in man! these sighs
 And pray'rs, which in this golden censer, mix'd
 With incense, I thy Priest before thee bring: 25
 Fruits of more pleasing savor from thy seed
 Sown with contrition in his heart, than those
 Which his own hand manuring all the trees
 Of Paradise could have produc'd, e're fall'n
 From innocence. Now therefore bend thine ear 30
 To supplication; hear his sighs though mute!
 Unskillful with what words to pray, let me
 Interpret for him; me, his advocate
 And propitiation; all his works on me,
 Good or not good ingraft: My merit those 35

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Shall perfect; and for these my death shall pay.
 Accept me; and in me from these receive
 The smell of peace tow'rd mankind: let him live
 Before thee reconcil'd, at least his days
 Number'd, tho' sad, till Death, his doom, which I
 To mitigate thus plead, not to reverse,
 To better life shall yield him; where with me
 All my redeem'd may dwell in joy and bliss;
 Made one with me, as I with thee am one,
 To whom the Father, without cloud, serene
 All thy request for man, accepted Son,
 Obtain; all thy request was my decree.
 But longer in that Paradise to dwell,
 The law I gave to nature him forbids.
 Those pure immortal elements, that know
 No gross, no unharmonious mixture foul,
 Eject him tainted now; and purge him off
 As a distemper, gross to air as gross,
 And mortal food, as may dispose him best
 For dissolution wrought by sin, that first
 Distemper'd all things; and of incorrupt
 Corrupted. I at first with two fair gifts
 Created him endow'd, with happiness
 And immortality: that fondly lost,
 This other serv'd but to eternize woe.
 Till I provided Death: so Death becomes
 His final remedy: and after life
 Try'd in sharp tribulation, and refin'd
 By faith and faithful works, to second life,
 Wak'd in the renovation of the just,
 Resigns him up with heav'n and earth renew'd.
 But let Us call to synod all the Blest,
 Thro' Heav'n's wide bounds: from them I will not hide
 My judgments, how with mankind I proceed;
 As how with peccant Angels late they saw,
 And in their state, tho' firm, stood more confirm'd.
 He ended, and the Son gave signal high
 To the bright minister that watch'd: he blew

His trumpet, heard in Orep since perhaps
 When God descended; and perhaps once more 75
 To sound at general dooib. Th' Angell blast
 Fill'd all the regions: from their blissful bow'rs
 Oamarantin shade, fountain or spring,
 By the waters of life, where'er they lat
 In fellowships of joy, the sons of light 80
 Hasted, resorting to the summons high,
 And took their seats: till from his throne supreme
 Th' Almighty thus pronounc'd his sov'reign will.

O Sons! like one of Us man is become
 To know both good and evil, since his taste 85
 Of that defended fruit: but let him boast
 His knowledge of good lost, and evil got:
 Happier! had it suffic'd him to have known
 Good by itself; and evil not at all.
 He sorrows now, repents and prays contrite! 90
 My motions in him: longer than they move;
 His heart I know how variable and vain
 Self-left. Left therefore his now bolder hand
 Reach also of the Tree of Life, and eat,
 And live for ever, dream at least to live 95
 For ever, to remove him I decree:
 And send him from the garden forth, to till
 The ground whence he was taken; bitter toil.

Michael, this my behest have thou in charge!
 Take to thee from among the Cherubim 100
 Thy choice of flaming warriors; lest the Fiend,
 Or in behalf of man, or to invade
 Vacant possession, some new trouble raise.
 Haste thee: and from the Paradise of God
 Without remorse drive out the sinful pair; 105
 From hallow'd ground th' unholy; and denounce
 To them and to their progeny from thence
 Perpetual banishment. Yet lest they faint,
 At the sad sentence rigorously urg'd,
 For I behold them soften'd, and with tears 110
 Bewailing their excess, all terror lide.

If patiently thy bidding they obey.
Dismiss them not disconsolate; reveal
To Adam what shall come in future days,
As I shall thee enlighten: intermix
My covenant in the woman's seed renew'd;
So send them forth: tho' sorrowing, yet in peace,
And on the east side of the garden place,
Where entrance up from Eden eas'd it climbs,
Cherubic watch, and of a sword the flame
Wide-waving, all approach far off to fright,
And guard all passage to the Tree of Life:
Lest Paradise a receptacle prove
To spirits foul, and all my trees their prey:
With whose stol'n fruit man once more to delude.

He ceas'd; and th' archangelic Pow'r prepar'd
For swift descent: with him the cohort bright
Of watchful Cherubim: four faces each
Had, like a double Janus, all their shape
Spangled with eyes, more numerous than those
Of Argus, and more wakeful than to drowse,
Charm'd with Assyrian pipe, the pastoral reed
Of Hermes, or his opiate rod. Mean while
To resalute the world with sacred light,
Leucothea wak'd; and with fresh dew inbalm'd
The earth; when Adam, and first matron Eve,
Had ended now their orisons; and found
Strength added from above: new hope to spring
Out of despair: joy, but with fear yet link'd;
Which thus to Eve his welcome words renew'd,

Eve, easily may faith admit; that all
The good which we enjoy, from Heav'n descends:
But that from us ought should ascend to Heav'n,
So prevalent, as to concern the mind
Of God high-bless'd, or to incline his will,
Hard to belief may seem: yet this will pray'r,
Or one short sigh of human breath, up-born
Ev'n to the seat of God. For since I fought
By pray'r th' offended Deity appeas'd,

Kneel'd, and before him humb'd all my heart, 150
 Methought I saw him placable and mild,
 Bending his ear: persuasion in me grew
 That I was heard with favor; peace return'd
 Home to my breast; and to my memory
 His promise, that thy seed shall bruise our foe: 155
 Which, then not minded in dismay, yet now
 Assures me that the bitterness of Death
 Is past, and we shall live: Whence hail to thee!
 Eve rightly call'd, mother of all mankind,
 Mother of all things living, since by thee 160
 Man is to live; and all things live for man!

Thou whom thus Eve, with sad demeanour meek:
 Ill worthy I such title should belong
 To me transgressor, who, for thee ordain'd
 A help, became thy snare: to me reproach 165
 Rather belongs, distrust, and all dispraise.
 But infinite in pardon was my Judge,
 That I, who first brought death on all, am grac'd
 The surce of life: next favourable thou,
 Who highly thus e' intitle me vouchsaf'st: 170
 Far other name deserving! But the field
 To labor calls us now with sweat impos'd,
 Though after sleepless night: for see! the morn,
 All unconcern'd with our unrest, begins
 Her rosy progress smiling: let us forth; 175
 I never from thy side henceforth to stray,
 Where'er our days work lies; though now enjoin'd
 Laborious, till day droop; while here we dwell,
 What can be toilsom in these pleasant walks?
 Here let us live, though in fall'n state, content! 180

So spake, so wish'd much-humb'd Eve; but fate
 Subscrib'd not: Nature first gave signs, impress'd
 On bird, beast, air: air suddenly eclips'd
 After short blush of morn: nigh in her sight,
 The bird of Jove, stoop'd from his aery tour, 185
 Two birds of gayest plume before him drove
 Down from a hill the beast that reigns in woods

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First hunter then, pursu'd a gentle brace,
 Goodliest of all the forest, hart and hind:
 Direct to th' eastern gate was bent their flight. 190
 Adam observ'd, and with his eye the chase
 Pursuing, not unmov'd, to Eve thus spake.

O Eve! some further change awaits us nigh,
 Which Heav'n by these mute signs in nature shows,
 Forerunners of his purpose: or to warn 195
 Us haply too secure of our discharge
 From penalty, because from death releas'd
 Some days: how long, and what till then our life,
 Who knows, or more than this, that we are dust,
 And thither must return and be no more? 200

Why else this double object in our sight,
 Of flight pursu'd in th' air, and o'er the ground,
 One way the self-same hour? Why in the east
 Darkness e're day's mid course, and morning light
 More orient in yon western cloud, that draws 205
 O'er the blue firmament a radiant white;
 And slow descends, with something heav'nly fraught?

He err'd not; for by this the heav'nly bands
 Down from a sky of jasper lighted now
 In Paradise, and on a hill made halt: 210
 A glorious apparition! had not doubt
 And carnal fear that day dimm'd Adam's eye.
 Not that more glorious, when the Angels met
 Jacob in Mahanaim, where he saw
 The field pavilion'd with his guardians bright: 215
 Nor that which on the flaming mount appear'd
 In Dothan, cover'd with a camp of fire,
 Against the Syrian king; who to surprize
 One man, assassin like, had levied war,
 War unproclaim'd. The princely Hierarch 220
 In their bright stand there left his Pow'rs, to seize
 Possession of the garden: he alone,
 To find where Adam shelter'd, took his way;
 Not unperceiv'd of Adam, who to Eve,
 While the great visitant approach'd, thus spake. 225

Eve,

Eve, now expect great tidings, which perhaps
 Of us will soon determine; or impose
 New laws to be observ'd: for I descry,
 From yonder blazing cloud that veils the hill
 One of the heav'nly host, and by his gait 230
 None of the meanest: some great Potentate,
 Or of the Thrones above; such majesty
 Invests him coming! yet not terrible
 That I should fear, nor sociably mild,
 As Raphael, that I should much confide, 235
 But solemn and sublime: whom not to offend,
 With reverence I must meet, and thou retire.

He ended, and th' Arch-Angel soon drew nigh,
 Not in his shape celestial, but as man
 Clad to meet man: over his lucid arms 240
 A military vest of purple flow'd,
 Livelier than Meliboean, or the grain
 Of Sarra, worn by Kings and Heroes old
 In time of truce: Iris had dipt the woof:
 His starry helm unbuckl'd, shew'd him prime 245
 In manhood, where youth ended: by his side
 As in a glistering Zodiac hung the sword,
 Satan's dire dread; and in his hand the spear.
 Adam bow'd low: he kingly from his state
 Inclined not, but his coming thus declar'd. 250

Adam! Heav'n's high behest no preface needs:
 Sufficient that thy pray'rs are heard, and Death,
 Then due by sentence when thou didst transgress,
 Defeated of his seizure many days
 Giv'n thee of grace, wherein thou may'st repent, 255
 And one bad act with many deeds well done
 May'st cover: well may then thy Lord, pleas'd,
 Redeem thee quite from Death's rapacious claim.
 But longer in this Paradise to dwell
 Permits not: to remove thee I am come, 260
 And send thee from the garden forth, to till
 The ground whence thou wast taken, fitter soil.

He added not; for Adam at the news

Heart-

Heart-struck with chilling gripe of sorrow stood,
That all his senses bound! Eve, who unseen
Yet all had heard, with audible lament
Discover'd soon the place of her retire.

O unexpected stroke, worse than of Death!
Must I thus leave thee, Paradise? thus leave
Thee, native soil, these happy walks and shades,
Fit haunt of Gods? where I had hope to spend,
Quiet though sad, the respite of that day

That must be mortal to us both! O flow'rs,
That never will in other climate grow;
My early visitation, and my last

At ev'n, which I bred up with tender hand
From the first op'ning bud, and gave you names,
Who now shall rear you to the Sun; or rank
Your tribes, and water from th' ambrosial fount?

Thee lastly, nuptial bow'r, by me adorn'd
With what to sight or smell was sweet, from thee
How shall I part, and whither wander down

Into a lower world; to this obscure
And wild? How shall we breathe in other air
Less pure, accusom'd to immortal fruits?

Whom thus the Angel interrupted mild:
Lament not, Eve, put patiently resign
What justly thou hast lost: nor set thy heart
Thus over-sord, on that which is not thine.

Thy going is not lonely: with thee goes
Thy husband; him to follow thou art bound:
Where he abides, think there thy native soil.

Adam, by this from the cold sudden damp
Recovering, and his scatter'd spirits return'd,
To Michael thus his humble words address'd.

Celestial, whether among the Thrones, or nam'd
Of them the highest; for such of shape may seem
Prince above Princes! gently hast thou told

Thy message, which might else in telling wound,
And in performing end us, what besides
Of sorrow, and dejection, and despair;

Our frailty can sustain, thy tidings bring,
 Departure from this happy place, our sweet
 Recess, and only consolation left
 Familiar to our eyes! all places else 303
 Inhospitable appear, and desolate;
 Nor knowing us, nor known. And if by pray'r
 Incessant, I could hope to change the will
 Of him who all things can, I would not cease
 To weary him with my assiduous cries. 310
 But pray'r against his absolute decree
 No more avails than breath against the wind;
 Blown stifling back on him that breathes it forth:
 Therefore to his great bidding I submit.
 This most afflicts me, that departing hence, 315
 As from his face I shall be hid depriv'd
 His blessed count'nance! Here I could frequent
 With worship place by place where he vouchsaf'd
 Presence divine; and to my sons relate:
 „On this mount he appear'd; under this tree 320
 „Stood visible; among these pines his voice
 „I heard; here with him at this fountain talk'd.“
 So many grateful altars I would rear
 Of grassy turf; and pile up every stone
 Of lustre from the brook; in memory, 325
 Or monument to ages: and thereon
 Offer sweet smelling gums, and fruits, and flow'rs.
 I yonder nether world where shall I seek
 His bright appearances, or foot-step trace?
 For though I fled him angry, yet recall'd 330
 To life prolong'd, and promis'd race I now
 Gladly behold though but his utmost skirts
 Of glory, and far off his steps adore.
 To whom thus Michael with regard benign.
 Adam! thou know'st Heav'n his, and all the earth, 335
 Not this rock only. His omnipresence fills
 Land, sea, and air, and every kind that lives,
 Fomented by his virtual pow'r, and warm'd.
 All th' earth he gave thee to possess, and rule:

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No despicable gift! surmise not then
 His presence to these narrow bounds confin'd
 Of Paradise or Eden: this had been
 Perhaps thy capital feat; from whence had spread
 All generations; and had hither come
 From all the ends of th' earth, to celebrate
 And reverence thee their great progenitor,
 But this praeceminence thou hast lost, brought down
 To dwell on even ground now with thy sons.
 Yet doubt not but in valley and in plain
 God is as here, and will be found alike
 Present, and of his presence many a sign
 Still following thee, still compassing the round
 With goodness, and paternal love; his face
 Express, and of his steps the track divine,
 Which that thou may'st believe, and be confirm'd
 Ere thou from hence depart, know I am sent
 To show thee what shall come in future days
 To thee and to thy offspring: good with bad
 Expect to hear, supernal grace contending
 With sinfulness of men; thereby to learn
 True patience, and to temper joy with fear
 And pious sorrow, equally inur'd
 By moderation either state to bear,
 Prosperous or adverse: so shalt thou lead
 Safest thy life, and best prepar'd indure
 Thy mortal passage when it comes. Ascend
 This hill. Let Eve, for I have drench'd her eyes,
 Here sleep below, while thou to foresight wak'st,
 As once thou slept'st, whilst she to life was form'd.
 To whom thus Adam gratefully reply'd,
 Ascend, I follow thee, safe Guide! the path
 Thou lead'st me; and to the hand of Heav'n submit,
 However chaf'ning: to the evil turn
 My obvious breast; arming to overcome
 By suffering, and earn rest from labor won:
 It so I may attain.—So both ascend,
 In the visions of God. It was a hill,

Of Paradise the highest; from whose top didst behold
 The hemisphere of earth; in clearest ken all
 Stretch'd out to th' amplest reach of prospect lay. 330
 Not higher that hill nor wider looking round,
 Whereon for different cause the tempter set
 Our second Adam, in the wilderness;
 To shew him all earth's kingdoms and their glory. 340
 His eye might there command wherever stood
 City of old or modern fame; the seat
 Of mightiest empire! from the distin'd walls
 Of Cambalu, seat of Cathaian Chama
 And Samarchand by Oxus, Tatemir's throne;
 To Peking, of Sinaean kings; and thence 390
 To Agra and Lahor of great Mogul
 Down to the golden Chersonese; or where
 The Persian in Ecbatan sat; or since
 In Hispahan: or, where the Russian Ksar
 In Moscow; or the Sultan in Bizancey
 Turchestan-born; nor could his eye not ken 395
 *) Th' empire of Negus, to his utmost port
 Erécoco; and the less maritim Kings,
 Monbaza, and Quiloa, and Melindé
 And Sofala thought Ophir, to the realm 400
 Of Congo, and Angola farthest south:
 Or thence, from Niger flood to Atlas mount
 The Kingdoms of Almanzor, Fez and Suz,
 Marocco, and Algiers, and Tremisen;
 On Europe thence; and where Rome was to sway 405
 The world; in spirit perhaps he also saw
 Rich México, the seat of Montezume;
 And Cusco in Peru, the richer seat
 Of Atabalipa; and yet unspoil'd
 Guiana; whose *) great city Geryon's sons
 Call El Dorado. But to nobler sights, 410
 Michael from Adam's eyes the film remov'd,
 Which that false fruit that promis'd clearer sight

*) Ethiopia.

**) Manoa.

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Had bred; then purg'd with euphrasy and rue
 The visual nerve, for he had much to see;
 And from the well of life three drops insin'd;
 So deep the power of these ingredients pierc'd,
 Ev'n to the inmost seat of mental sight,
 That Adam, now inform'd, to close his eyes,
 Sunk down, and all his spirits became intrans'd:
 But him the gentle Angel by the hand
 Soon rais'd, and his attention thus recall'd.

Adam, now open mine eyes, and first behold
 Th' effects which thy original crime hath wrought
 In some to spring from thee! who never touch'd
 Th' excepted tree; nor with the Snake conspir'd;
 Nor sinn'd thy sin: yet from that sin derive
 Corruption, to bring forth more violent deeds.

His eyes he open'd, and beheld a field
 Part arable and till'd, whereon were sheaves
 New reap'd: the other part, sheep-walks and folds:
 Part 'th' midst an altar as the land-mark stood,
 Rustic, of grassy sod; thither anon
 A sweaty reaper from his village brought
 First fruits, the green ear, and the yellow sheaf,
 Uncull'd, as came to hand. A shepherd next
 More meek, came with the firstlings of his flock,
 Choicest and best: then sacrificing, laid
 The inwards and their fat, with incense strow'd,
 On the cleft wood, and all due rites perform'd,
 His offering soon propitious fire from Heaven
 Consum'd with nimble glance, and grateful steam
 The other's not, for his was not sincere.
 Whereat he only rag'd, and as they talk'd
 Smote him into the midriff with a stone,
 That beat ut life: he fell, and deadly pale
 Groan'd out his soul with gulping blood effus'd:
 Much at that sight was Adam in his heart
 Disinay'd, and thus in haste to th' Angel cry'd.

O Teacher! some great mischief hath befall'n
 To that meek man, who well had sacrific'd:

Is piety thus, and pure devotion paid?
 T' whom Michael thus, he also mov'd, reply'd:
 These two are brethren, Adam; and to come
 Out of thy loins: th' unjust the just hath slain; 455
 For envy, that his brother's offering found
 From Heav'n acceptance: but the bloody fact
 Will be aveng'd; and th' other's faith approv'd
 Lose no reward, though here thou see him die,
 Rolling in dust and gore. To which our fire. 460

Alas; both for the deed and for the cause!
 But have I now seen Death? is this the way
 I must return to native dust? O sight
 Of terror, foul and ugly to behold,
 Horrid to think, how horrible to feel! 465

To whom thus Michael, Death thou hast seen
 In his first shape on man: but many shapes
 Of Death, and many are the ways that lead
 To his grim cave: all dismal! yet to sense
 More terrible at th' entrance than within. 470

Some, as thou saw'st, by violent stroke shall die:
 By fire, flood, famine: by intemperance more
 In meats and drinks, which on the earth shall bring
 Diseases dire: of which a monstrous crew
 Before thee shall appear; that thou may'st know 475
 What misery th' inabstinence of Eve

Shall bring on men, Immediately a place
 Before his eyes appear'd, sad, noisome, dark,
 A lazarus-house it seem'd; wherein were laid
 Numbers of all diseas'd: all maladies 480

Of ghastly spasm, or racking torture, qualms
 Of heart-sick agony, all feverous kinds,
 Convulsions, epilepsies, fierce catarrhs,
 Intestin stone, and ulcer, cholic pangs,
 Daemoniac phrenzy, mooping melancholy, 485

And moon-struck madness, pining atrophy,
 Marasmus, and wide-wasting pestilence,
 Dropsies, and asthmas, and joint-racking rheums.
 Dire was the tolling, deep the groans! Despair

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Tended the sick busiest from couch to couch: 490
And over them triumphant Death his dart
Shook; but delay'd to strike, though oft invoc'd
With vows, as their chief good, and final hope.
Sight so deform what heart of rock could long
Dry-ey'd behold? Adam could not, but wept, 495
Though not of woman born; compassion quell'd
His best of man, and gave him up to tears
A space; till firmer thoughts restrain'd excess,
And scarce recovering words his plaint renew'd.

O miserable mankind! to what fall 500
Degraded, to what wretched state reserv'd!
Better end here unborn! Why is life giv'n
To be thus wrested from us? rather, why
Obtruded on us thus? who, if we knew
What we receive, would either not accept 505
Life offer'd; or soon beg to lay it down;
Glad to be so dismiss'd in peace. Can thus
Th' image of God in man, created once
So goodly and erect, though faulty since
To such unsightly sufferings be debas'd, 510
Under inhuman pains? Why should not man,
Retaining still divine similitude
In part, from such deformities be free,
And for his Maker's image sake exempt?

Their Maker's image, answer'd Michael, then 515
Forsook them, when themselves they villify'd
To serve ungovern'd appetite: and took
His image whom they serv'd, and brutish vice,
Inductive mainly to the sin of Eve:
Therefore so abject is their punishment, 520
Disfiguring not God's likeness, but their own:
Or if his likeness, by themselves defac'd,
While they pervert pure nature's healthful rules
To loathsome sickness; worthily, since they
God's image did not reverence in themselves. 525

I yield it just, said Adam, and submit!
But is there yet no other way, besides

These

These painful passages, how we may come
To death, and mix with our connatural dust?

There is, said Michael, if thou well observe 530
The rule not of too much; by temperance taught
In what thou eat'st and drink'st; seeking from thence
Due nourishment, not gluttonous delight,
Till many years over thy head return;
So may'st thou live; till like ripe fruit thou drop 535
Into thy mother's lap: or be with ease
Gather'd, not harshly pluck'd, for death matured.
This is old age: but then, thou must outlive
Thy youth, thy strength, thy beauty; which will change
To wither'd, weak, and gray: thy senses then 540
Obtuse, all taste of pleasure must forgo,
To what thou hast; and for the air of youth,
Hopeful, and cheerful, in thy blood will reign
A melancholy dapp of cold, and dry
To weigh thy spirits down; and last consume 545
The balm of life. To whom our ancestor,

Henceforth I fly not death, nor would prolong
Life much: bent rather how I may be quit;
Fairest and easiest of this cumbrous charge,
Which I must keep till my appointed day 550
Of rendring up, patiently attend
My dissolution! Michael reply'd
Nor love thy life, nor hate; but what thou liv'st
Live well; how long, or short, permit to Heav'n.
And now prepare thee for another fight. 555

He look'd, and saw a spacious plain, whereon
Were tents of various hue: by some, were herds
Of cattle grazing: others, whence the sound
Of instruments, that made melodious chime,
Was heard, of harp, and organ, and who mov'd 560
Their stops and chords was seen: his volant touch
Instinct through all proportions, low and high,
Fled and persu'd transverse the resonant fugue.
In other part stood one who at the forge
Lab'ring, two massy clods of iron and brass 565

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Had melted, whether found where casual fire
 Had wasted woods on mountain or in vale,
 Down to the veins of earth, thence gliding hot
 To some cay's mouth, or whether wash'd by stream
 From underground, the liquid ore he drain'd 570
 Into fit molds prepar'd, from which he form'd
 First his own tools, then, what might else be wrought
 Fulfil or grav'n in metal. After these,
 But on the hither side, a different sort
 From the high neighb'ring hills, which was their seat, 575
 Down to the plain descended: by their guise
 Just men they seem'd, and all their study bent
 To worship God aright, and know his works
 Not hid; nor those things last, which might preserve
 Freedom and peace to men: they on the plain 580
 Long had not walk'd, when from the tents behold
 A bevy of fair woman, richly gay
 In gems and wanton dress; tho' th' harp they sung
 Soft amorous ditties, and in dance came on!
 The men, tho' grave, ey'd them, and let their eyes 585
 Rove without rein, till in the amorous net
 Fast caught, they lik'd, and each his liking chose:
 And now of love they treat, till th' ev'ning star
 Love's harbinger, appear'd: then all in heat
 They light the nuptial torch, and bid invoke 590
 Hymen, then first to marriage rites invok'd:
 With feast and music all the tents resound,
 Such happy interview, and fair event
 Of love and youth not lost, songs, garlands, flow'rs.
 And charming symphonies, attach'd the heart 595
 Of Adam, soon inclin'd t' admit delight,
 The bent of Nature! which he thus express'd.
 True opener of mine eyes, prime angel blest!
 Much better seems this vision, and more hope
 Of peaceful days portends, than those two past: 600
 Those were of hate, and death, or pain much worse:
 Here Nature seems fulfill'd in all her ends.

To whom thus Michael. Judge not what is best

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By pleasure, though to nature seeming meet,
 Created, as thou art, to nobler end 605
 Holy and pure, conformity divine!
 Those tents thou saw'st so pleasant, were the tents
 Of wickedness, wherein shall dwell his race
 Who slew his brother: studious they appear
 Of arts that polish life, inventors rare; 610
 Unmindful of their Maker, though his Spirit
 Taught them; but they his gifts acknowledg'd none
 Yet they a beauteous offspring shall beget:
 For that fair female troop thou saw'st, that seem'd
 Of Goddeses, so blithe, so smooth, so gay, 615
 Yet empty of all good, wherein consists
 Woman's domestic honor and chief praise,
 Bred only and completed to the taste
 Of lustful appetite; to sing, to dance,
 To dress, and troll the tongue, and roll the eye. 620
 To these, that sober race of men, whose lives
 Religious tittled them the sons of God,
 Shall yield up all their virtue, all their fame
 Ignobly! to the trains and to the smiles
 Of these fair atheists; and now swim in joy, 625
 Erelong to swim at large, and laugh: for which
 The world ere long a world of tears must weep!
 To whom thus Adam of short joy bereft.
 O pity and shame! that they, who to live well
 Enter'd so fair, should turn aside to tread 630
 Paths indirest, or in the mid way faint!
 But still I see the tenor of man's woe
 Hold on the same, from woman to begin.
 From man's effeminate slackness it begins;
 Said th' Angel, who should better hold his place
 By wisdom and superior gifts receiv'd.
 But now prepare thee for another scene.
 He look'd, and saw wide territory spread
 Before him, towns and rural works between:
 Cities of men with lofty gates and tow'rs; 640
 Concourse in arms, fierce faces threatening war;
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Giants of mighty bone, and bold emprise!
 Part wield their arms, part curb the foaming steed:
 Single or in array of battle rang'd
 Both horse and food; nor idly must'ring stood: 645
 One way a band select from forage drives
 A herd of beeves, fair oxen and fair kine
 From a fat meadow-ground; or fleecy flock,
 Ewes and their bleating lambs over the plain;
 Their booty: scarce with life the shepherds fly, 650
 But call in aid, which makes a bloody fray.
 With cruel tournament the squadrons join!
 Where cattle pastur'd late, now scatter'd lies
 With carcasses, and arms th' insanguin'd field,
 Deserted. Others, to a city strong 655
 Lay siege, incamp'd; by batt'ry, scale, and mine
 Assaulting: others from the wall defend
 With dart and jav'lin, stones and sulph'rous fire:
 On each hand slaughter and gigantic deeds.
 In other part, the sceptred Heralds call 660
 To council in the city gates: anon
 Grey-headed men and grave, with warriors mix'd,
 Assemble, and harangues are heard: but soon
 In factious opposition: till at last
 Of middle age one rising, eminent 665
 In wise deport, spake much of right and wrong,
 Of justice, of religion, truth and peace,
 And judgment from above. Him old and young
 Exploded, and had seiz'd with violent hands;
 Had not a cloud descending snatch'd him thence, 670
 Unseen amid the throng. So violence
 Proceeded, and oppression, and sword-law
 Through all the plain, and refuge none was found.
 Adam was all in tears, and to his guide
 Lamenting turn'd full sad: O what are these! 675
 Death's minister's, not men! who thus deal death
 Inhumanly to men, and multiply
 Ten thousand fold the sin of him who slew
 His brother: for of whom such massacre

Make they but of their brethren; men of men? 680
 But who was that just man, whom had not Heav'n
 Rescued, had in his righteousness been lost?

To whom thus Michael. These are the product
 Of those ill-match'd marriages thou saw'st;
 Where good with bad were match'd; who of themselves
 Abhor to join: and by imprudence mix'd,
 Produce prodigious births of body or mind.
 Such were these giants; men of high renown!
 For in those days might only shall be admir'd,
 And valor and heroic virtue call'd: 690

To overcome in battel, and subdue
 Nations, and bring home spoils with infinite
 Man-slaughter, shall be held the highest pitch
 Of human glory; and for glory done
 Of triumph, to be styl'd great conquerors, 695
 Patrons of mankind, Gods, and sons of Gods,
 Destroyers rightlier call'd, and plagues of men.
 Thus fame shall be achiev'd, renown on earth;
 And what most merits fame in silence hid.

But he, the seventh from thee, whom thou beheld'st
 The only righteous in a world perverse,
 And therefore hated, therefore so beset
 With foes, for daring single to be just,
 And utter odious truth, that God would come
 To judge them with his Sains: him the Most High 705
 Rapt in a balmy cloud with winged steeds,
 Did, as thou saw'st, receive; to walk with God
 High in salvation, and the climes of bliss,
 Exempt from death: to shew thee what reward
 Awaits the good; the rest, what punishment: 710
 Which now direct thine eyes, and soon behold.

He look'd, and saw the face of things quite chang'd:
 The brazen throat of war had ceas'd to roar;
 All now turn'd to jollity, and game,
 To luxury and riot, feast and dance; 715
 Marrying or prostituting, as beset,
 Rape or adultery, where passing fair

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Allur'd them: thence from cups, to civil broils.
 At length a reverend fire among them came,
 And of their doings great dislike declar'd, 720
 And testify'd against their ways: he oft
 Frequented their assemblies, where so met,
 Triumphs or festivals and to them preach'd
 Conversion and repentance: as to souls
 In prison under judgments imminent: 725
 But all in vain! which when he saw, he ceas'd
 Contending, and remov'd his tents far off.
 Then from the mountain hewing timber tall,
 Began to build a vessel of huge bulk;
 Measur'd by cubit, length and breadth and height; 730
 Smear'd round with pitch; and in the side a door
 Contriv'd; and of provisions laid in large,
 For man and beast: when lo, o wonder strange!
 Of every beast, and bird, and insect small
 Came sevens, and pairs, and enter'd in, as taught 735
 Their order: last the fire, and his three sons
 With their four wives, and God made fast the door.
 Meanwhile the southwind rose, and with black wings
 Wide-hov'ring, all the clouds together drove
 From under Heav'n; the hills to their supply 740
 Vapor, and exhalation dusk and moist,
 Sent up amain: and now the thicken'd sky
 Like a dark ceiling stood; down rush'd the rain
 Impetuous: and continu'd till the earth
 No more was seen: the floating vessel swum 745
 Uplifted; and secure with beaked prow
 Rode tilting o'er the waves: all dwellings else
 Flood overwhelm'd, and them with all their pomp
 Deep under water roll'd: sea cover'd sea;
 Sea without shore! and in their palaces 750
 Where luxury late reign'd, sea-monsters whelp'd
 And stabled: of mankind, so numerous late,
 All left, in one small bottom swum imbark'd.
 How dost thou grieve then, Adam, to behold
 The end of all thy offspring, end so sad, 755

Depopulation! Thee another flood,
 Of tears and sorrow a flood thee also drown'd,
 And sunk thee as thy sons; till gently rear'd
 By th' Angel, on thy feet thou stood'st at last,
 Tho' comfortless; as when a father mourns 760
 His children, all in view destroy'd at once:
 And scarce to th' Angel utter'dst thus thy plaint.
 O visions ill foreseen! Better had I
 Liv'd ignorant of future, so had born
 My part of evil only, each day's lot 765
 Enough to bear: those now, that were dispens'd
 The burden of many ages, on me light
 At once, by my foreknowledge gaining birth
 Abortive, to torment me ere their being,
 With thought that they must be. Let no men seek 770
 Henceforth to be foretold what shall befall
 Him or his children: evil he may be sure:
 Which neither his foreknowing can prevent;
 And he the future evil shall no less
 In apprehension than in substance feel; 775
 Grievous to bear! But that care now is past,
 Man is not whom to warn: those few escap'd
 Famine and anguish will at last consume
 Wand'ring that watry desert. I had hope
 When violence was ceas'd, and war on earth, 780
 All would have then gone well, peace would have crown'd
 With length of happy days the race of man.
 But I was far deceiv'd! For now I see
 Peace to corrupt no less than war to waste.
 How comes it thus? Unfold, celestial guide! 785
 And whether here the race of man will end.
 To whom thus Michael. Those whom last thou saw'st.
 In triumph and luxurious wealth, are they
 First seen in acts of prowess eminent
 And great exploits; but of true virtue void: 790
 Who having spilt much blood, and done much waste,
 Subduing nations; and achiev'd thereby
 Fame in the world, high titles, and rich prey;

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Shall change their course to pleasure, ease and sloth,
 Surfeit, and lust; till wantonness and pride 795
 Raise out of friendship hostile deeds in peace.
 The conquer'd also, and enslav'd by war,
 Shall with their freedom lost all virtue lose
 And fear of God; from whom their piety feign'd
 In sharp contest of battel found no aid 800
 Against invaders: therefore cool'd in zeal,
 Thenceforth shall practise how to live secure,
 Worldly or dissolute, on what their Lords
 Shall leave them to enjoy: for th' earth shall bear
 More than enough, that temperance may be try'd: 805
 So all shall turn degenerate, all deprav'd;
 Justice and temperance, truth and faith forgot!
 One man except, the only son of light
 In a dark age, against example good,
 Against allurement, custom, and a world 810
 Offended, fearless of reproach and scorn,
 Or violence; he of their wicked ways
 Shall them admonish; and before them set
 The paths of righteousness, how much more safe,
 And full of peace, denouncing wrath to come 815
 On their impenitence; and shall return
 Of them derided. But, of God observ'd,
 The one just man alive, by his command
 Shall build a wondrous ark, as thou beheldst,
 To save himself and household, from amidst 820
 A world devote to universal wrack.
 No sooner he with them of man and beast
 Select for life shall in the ark be lodg'd,
 And shelter'd round, but all the cataracts
 Of Heav'n set open on the earth shall pour 825
 Rain day and night: all fountains of the deep
 Broke up, shall heave the ocean to usurp
 Beyond all bounds, till inundation rise
 Above the highest hills. Then shall this mount
 Of Paradise, by might of waves be mov'd 830
 Out of his place, push'd by the horned flood,
 With

With all his verdure spoil'd, and trees adrift,
 Down the great river to the opening gulf,
 And there take root and island salt and bare,
 The haunt of Seals, and Orcs, and Sea-mews clang; 835
 To teach thee that God attributes to place
 No sanctity, if none be thither brought
 By men who there frequent, or therein dwell.
 And now what further shall ensue, behold.

He look'd, and saw the ark hull on the flood, 840
 Which now abated: for the clouds were fled,
 Driv'n by a keen north-wind, that blowing dry
 Wrinkled the face of deluge, as decay'd;
 And the clear sun on his wide watry glass
 Gaz'd hot, and of the fresh wave largely drew, 845
 As after thirst: which made their flowing shrink
 From standing lake to tripping ebb, that stole
 With soft foot tow'ards the deep, who now had stop't
 His sluices, as the Heav'n his windows shut.
 The Ark no more now flotes, but seems on ground 850
 Fast on the top of some high mountain fix'd.
 And now the tops of hills as rocks appear:
 With clamor thence the rapid currents drive,
 Tow'ards the retreating sea their furions tide.
 Forthwith from out the ark a raven flies, 855
 And after him, the surer messenger,
 A dove sent forth once and again to spy
 Green tree or ground whereon his foot may light:
 The second time returning, in his bill
 An olive-leaf he brings, pacific sign! 860
 Anon dry ground appears, and from his ark
 The ancient fire descends with all his train:
 Then with uplifted hands, and eyes devout,
 Grateful to Heav'n, over his head beholds
 A dewy cloud, and in the cloud a bow 865
 Conspicuous with three list'd colors gay,
 Betokening peace from God, and cov'nant new.
 Whereat the heart of Adam, erst so sad,
 Greatly rejoyc'd, and thus his joy broke forth.

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- O thou who future things canst represent 870

As present, heav'nly instructor! I revive
At this last sight, assur'd that man shall live
With all the creatures, and their seed preserve.

Far less I now lament for one whole world
Of wicked sons destroy'd, that I rejoice 875

For one man found so perfect and so just,
That God vouchsafes to raise another world
From him, and all his anger to forget.

But say, what mean those color'd streaks in heav'n
Distended as the brow of God appeas'd, 880

Or serve they as a flow'ry verge to bind
The fluid skirts of that same watry cloud,
Lest it again dissolve and show'r the earth?

To whom th' Arch-Angel. Dextrously thou aim'st;
So willingly doth God remit his ire, 885

Though late repenting him of man deprav'd;
Griev'd at his heart, when looking down he saw
The whole earth fill'd with violence; and all flesh
Corrupting each their way: yet, those remov'd,
Such grace shall one just man find in his sight, 890

That he relents, not to blot out mankind,
And makes a covenant never to destroy
The earth again by flood; nor let the sea
Surpass his bounds; nor rain to drown the world,
With man therein or beast: but when he brings 895

Over the earth a cloud, will therein set
His triple-color'd bow, whereon to look,
All call to mind his covenant: day and night,
Seed-time and harvest, heat and hoary frost
Shall hold their course; till fire purge all things new,
Both Heav'n and Earth wherein the just shall dwell.

The End of the Eleventh Book.

B O O K XII.

As one who in his journey bates at noon,
 Tho' bent on speed: so here th' Arch-Angel paus'd,
 Betwixt the world destroy'd and world restor'd,
 If Adam ought perhaps might interpose:
 Then with transition sweet new speech resumes. 5

Thus thou hast seen one world begin and end,
 And man as from a second stock proceed.
 Much thou hast yet to see; but I perceive
 Thy mortal sight to fail: objects divine
 Must needs impair and weary human sense. 10
 Henceforth what is to come I will relate,
 Thou therefore give due audience, and attend.

This second source of men, while yet but few,
 And while the dread of judgment past remains
 Fresh in their minds, fearing the Deity, 15
 With some regard to what is just and right
 Shall lead their lives, and multiply apace;
 Lab'ring the soil, and reaping plenteous crop.
 Corn, wine and oil: and from the herd, or flock,
 Oft sacrificing bullock, lamb, or kid, 20
 With large wine-offerings pour'd, and sacred feast,
 Shall spend their days in joy unblam'd and dwell
 Long time in peace by families and tribes
 Under paternal rule: till one shall rise
 Of proud ambitious heart; who not content 25
 With fair equality, fraternal state;
 Will arrogate dominion undeserv'd
 Over his brethren, and quite dispossess
 Concord and law of nature from the earth;
 Hunting, and men, not beasts, shall be his game, 30
 With war and hostile snare such as refuse
 Subjection to his empire tyrannous.
 A mighty hunter thence he shall be styl'd
 Before the Lord; as in despite of Heav'n,

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Of from Heav'n claiming second sov'reignty: 35
 And from rebellion shall derive his name;
 Though of rebellion others he accuse.
 He with a crew, whom like ambition joins
 With him or under him to tyrannize,
 Marching from Eden tow'rds the west, shall find 40
 The plain, wherein a black bituminous gurge
 Boils out from under ground, the mouth of hell.
 Of brick, and of that stuff they cast to build
 A city and tow'r, whose top may reach to Heav'n;
 And get themselves a name: lest far dispers'd 45
 In foreign lands their memory be lost;
 Regardless wether good or evil fame.
 But God, who oft descends to visit men
 Unseen, and through their habitations walks
 To mark their doings, them beholding soon, 50
 Comes down to see their city, ere the tow'r
 Obstruft Heav'n-tow'rs; and in derision sets
 Upon their tongues a various spirit, to rase
 Quite out their native language: and instead
 To sow a jangling noise of words unknown. 55
 Forthwith a hideous gabble rises loud
 Among the builders: each to other calls
 Not understood; till hoarse, and all in rage,
 As mock'd they storm: great laughter was in Heav'n,
 And looking down, to see the hubbub strage, 60
 And hear the din: thus was the building left
 Ridiculous; and the work Confusion nam'd.

Whereto thus Adam, fatherly displeas'd.
 O execrable son! so to aspire
 Above his brethren; to himself assuming 65
 Authority usurp'd, from God not giv'n.
 He gave us only over beast, fish, fowl,
 Dominion absolute; that right we hold
 By his donation: but man over men
 He made not Lord: such title to himself 70
 Reserving, human left from human free,
 But this usurper his encroachment proud

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Stays

Stays not on man: to God his tow'r intends
 Siege and defiance. Wretched man! What food
 Will he convey up thither to sustain 75
 Himself and his rash army; where thin air
 Above the clouds will pine his entrails gross;
 And famish him of breath, if not of bread?
 To whom thus Michael. Justly thou abhorr'st
 That son, who on the quiet state of men 80
 Such trouble brought, affecting to subdue
 Rational liberty: yet know withal,
 Since by original lapse, true liberty
 Is lost, which always with right reason dwells
 Twin'd, and from her hath no dividual being: 85
 Reason in man obscur'd, or not obey'd,
 Immediately inordinate desires
 And upstart passions catch the government
 From reason; and to servitude reduce
 Man till then free. Therefore, since he permits 90
 Within himself unworthy pow'rs to reign
 Over free reason; God in judgment just
 Subjects him from without to violent lords:
 Who oft as undeservedly inthrall
 His outward freedom. Tyranny must be; 95
 Though to the tyrant thereby no excuse.
 Yet sometimes nations will decline so low
 From virtue, which in reason, that no wrong,
 But justice, and some fatal curse annex'd,
 Deprives them of their outward liberty; 100
 Their inward lost; witness th' irreverent son
 Of him who built the Ark; who for the shame
 Done to his father, heard his heavy curse,
 „*Servant of Servants*,“ on his vicious race.
 Thus will this latter, as the former world, 105
 Still tend from bad to worse; till God at last
 Wearied with their iniquities; withdraw
 His presence from among them, and avert
 His holy eyes; resolving from thenceforth
 To leave them to their own polluted ways: 110
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And one peculiar nation to select
 From all the rest, of whom to be invoc'd,
 A nation from one faithful man to spring:
 Him on this side Euphrates yet residing,
 Bred up in idol-worship. O that men **115**
 Canst thou believe? should be so stupid grown,
 While yet the Patriarch liv'd, who scap'd the flood,
 As to forsake the living God, and fall
 To worship their own work in wood and stone
 For Gods! yet him God the most High vouchsafes **120**
 To call by vision from his father's house,
 His kindred and false Gods, into at land
 Which he will shew him: and from him will raise
 A mighty nation! and upon him show'r
 His benediction so, that in his seed **125**
 All nations shall be blest: he straight obeys,
 Not knowing to what land, yet firm believes.
 I see him, but thou canst not, with what faith
 He leaves his Gods, his friends, and native soil
 Ur of Chaldaea, passing now the ford **130**
 To Haran: after him a cumbrous train
 Of herds and flocks, and numerous servitude:
 Not wand'ring poor, but trusting all his wealth
 With God, who call'd him, in a land unknown.
 Canaan he now attains; I see his tents **135**
 Pitch'd about Sichem, and the neighb'ring plain
 Of Moreh. There by promise he receives
 Gift to his progeny of all that land;
 From Hamath northward to the desert south;
 Things by their names I call, tho yet unnam'd, **140**
 From Hermon east, to the great western sea;
 Mount Hermon, yonder sea, each place behold
 In prospect, as I point them, on the shore
 Mount Carmel; here the double-founted stream,
 Jordan, true limit eastward: but his sons **145**
 Shall dwell to Senir, that long ridge of hills.
 This ponder, that all nations of the earth
 Shall in his seed be blessed: by that seed

Is meant thy great Deliverer, who shall bruise
 The serpent's head; whereof to thee anon 150
 Plainlier shall be reveal'd. This Patriarch blest,
 Whom faithful Abraham due time shall call,
 A son, and of his son a grand-child leaves;
 Like him in faith, is wisdom, and renown.
 The grand-child with twelve sons increas'd departs 155
 From Canaan, to a land hereafter call'd
 Egypt, divided by the river Nile:
 Seere where it flows, disgorging at seven mouths
 Into the sea! To sojourn in that land
 He comes, invited by a younger son 160
 In time of dearth; a son whose worthy deeds
 Raise him to be the second in that realm
 Of Pharaoh: there he dies, and leaves his race
 Growing into a nation: and now grown,
 Suspected to a sequent king, who seeks 165
 To stop their over-growth, as inmate guests
 Too numerous; whence of guests he makes them slaves
 Inhospitably; and kills their infant males:
 Till by two brethren, those two brethren call
 Moses and Aaron, sent from God to claim 170
 His people from intisalment, they return
 With glory and spoil back to their promis'd land.
 But first the lawless tyrant who denies
 Tho know their God, or message to regard,
 Must be compell'd by sings and judgment dire: 175
 To blood unshed the rivers must be turn'd;
 Frogs, lice, and flies, must all his palace fill
 With loath'd intrusion, and fill all the land:
 His cattle must of rot and murren die:
 Botches and blains must all his flesh imboss, 180
 And all his people: thunder mix'd with hail,
 Hail mix'd with fire, must rend th' Egyptian sky,
 And wheel on th' earth, devouring where it rolls:
 What it devours not, herb, or fruit, or grain,
 A darksome cloud of locusts swarming down 185
 Must eat, and on the ground leave nothing green:

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Darkneſs muſt overſhadow all his bounds,
 Palpable darkneſs! and blot out three days:
 Laſt, with one midnight ſtroke, all the firſt-born
 Of Egypt muſt lie dead. Thus with ten wounds 190
 The river dragon tam'd at length ſubmits.
 To let his ſojourners depart; and oſc
 155 Humbles his ſtubborn heart; but ſtill as ice
 More harden'd after thaw: till in his rage
 Purſuing whom he late diſmiſs'd, the ſea 195
 Swallows him with his hoſt; but them lets paſs
 As on dry land between two chryſtal walls;
 160 Aw'd by the rod of Moſes ſo to ſtand
 Divided, till his reſcud gain their ſhore:
 Such wondrous pow'r God to his ſaint will lend, 200
 Through preſent in his Angel, who ſhall go
 Before them in a cloud, and pillar of fire;
 165 By day a cloud, by night a pillar of fire;
 To guide them in their journey, and remove
 Behind-them, while th' obdurate king purſues. 205
 All night he will purſue, put his approach
 Darkneſs defends between till morning watch;
 170 Then through the fiery pillar and the cloud
 God looking forth will trouble all his hoſt,
 And craze their chariot-wheels: when by command 210
 Moſes' once more his potent rod extends
 Over the ſea, the ſea his rod obeys:
 175 On their imbattled ranks the waves return,
 And overwhelm their war! The race elect,
 Safe towards Canaan from the ſhore advance 215
 Through the wild deſert; not the readieſt way,
 Leſt entring on the Canaanite alarm'd
 180 War terrify them inexpert, and fear
 Return them back to Aegypt, chuſing rather
 Inglorious life with ſervitude: for life, 220
 To noble and ignoble is more ſweet
 Untrain'd in arms, where raſhneſs leads not on.
 185 This alſo ſhall they gain by their delay
 In the wide wilderneſs: there they ſhall found

Their

Their goverment, and their great senate choose 225
 Thro' the twelve tribes, to rule by laws ordain'd,
 God from the mount of Sinai, whose gray top
 Shall tremble, he descending, will himself
 In thunder, lightning, and loud trumpets sound
 Ordain them laws: part such as appertain 230
 To civil justice: part religious rites
 Of sacrifice: informing them by types,
 And shadows, of that destin'd seed to bruise
 The serpent, by what means he shall atchieve
 Mankind's deliverance. But the voice of God 235
 To mortal ear is dreadful! They beseech
 That Moses might report to them his will,
 And terror cease; He grants what they besought
 Instructed that to God is no access
 Without mediator, whose high office now 240
 Moses in figure bears, to introduce
 One greater, of whose day he shall foretel,
 And all the prophets in their age the times
 Of Great Messiah shall sing. Thus laws and rites
 Establish'd, such delight hath God in men 245
 Obedient to his will, that he vouchsafes
 Among them to set up his tabernacle:
 The holy One with mortal men to dwell
 By his prescript a Sanctuary is fram'd
 Of cedar, overlaid with gold, therein 250
 An ark, and in the ark his testimony,
 The records of his cov'nant; over these
 A mercy-feat of gold between the wings
 Of two bright Cherubim: before him burn
 Seven lamps as in a zodiac representing 255
 The heav'nly fires: over the tent a cloud
 Shall rest by day, a fiery gleam by night,
 Save when they journey: and a length they come,
 Conducted by his Angel to the land
 Promis'd to Abraham and his seed—— The rest 260
 Were long to tell, how many battles fought,
 How many Kings destroy'd, and kingdoms won,

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225 Or how the Sun shall in mid Heav'n stand still
A day entire, and night's due course adjourn,
Man's voice commanding, „Sun in Gibeon stand, 265
„And thou moon in the vale of Ajalon,
„Till Israel overcome;“ so call the third
230 From Abraham, son of Isaac, from him
His whole descent, who thus shall Canaan win.

Here Adam interpos'd. O sent from Heav'n, 270
Inlightner of my darkness! gracious things
Thou hast reveal'd; those chiefly which concern
235 just Abraham and his seed: now first I find
Mine eyes true op'ning, and my heart much eas'd;
Ere while perplex'd with thoughts what would become
Of me and all mankind: but now I see
His day, in whom all nations shall be blest:

240 Favor unmerited by me, who sought
Forbidden knowledge by forbidden means.
This yet I apprehend not, why to those
Among whom God will deign to dwell on earth, 280
So many and so various laws are giv'n:
245 So many laws argue so many sins
Among them: how can God with such reside?

To whom thus Michael: Doubt not but that sin 285
Will reign among them, as of thee begot:
And therefore was law giv'n them to evince
250 Their natural pravity, by stirring up
Sin against law to fight: that when they see
Law can discover sin, but not remove, 290
Save by those shadowy expiations weak,
The blood of bulls and goats, they may conclude
255 Some blood more precious must be paid for man;
Just for unjust: that in such righteousness
To them by faith imputed, they may find 295
Justification towards God, and peace
Of conscience; which the law by ceremonies
260 Cannot appease: nor man the moral part
Perform: and not performing, cannot live.
So law appears imperfect, and but giv'n

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With

With purpose to resign them in full time
 Up to a better cov'nant; disciplin'd
 From shadowy types to truth; from flesh to spirit,
 From imposition of strict laws, to free
 Acceptance of large grace; from servil fear 305
 To filial; works of law, to works of faith.
 And therefore shall not Moses, though of God
 Highly belov'd, being but the minister
 Of law, his people into Canaan lead;
 But Joshua: whom the Gentiles Jesus call; 310
 His name and office bearing, who shall quell
 The adversary serpent; and bring back
 Through the world's wilderness long wander'd man
 Safe to eternal Paradise of rest.
 Mean while they, in their earthly Canaan plac'd 315
 Long time shall dwell and prosper: but when sins
 National interrupt their public peace,
 Provoking God to raise them enemies,
 From whom as oft he saves them penitent;
 By Judges first, then under Kings: of whom 320
 The second, both for piety renown'd
 And puissant deeds, a promise shall receive
 Irrevocable, that his regal throne
 For ever shall indure: the like shall sing
 All prophecy, that of the royal stock 325
 Of David, so I name this king, shall rise
 A son, the woman's seed to thee foretold:
 Foretold to Abraham; as in whom shall trust
 All nations; and to kings foretold, of kings
 The last; for of his reign shall be no end. 330
 But first a long succession must ensue,
 And his next son, for wealth and wisdom fam'd,
 The clouded Ark of God, till then in tents
 Wand'ring, shall in a glorious Temple inshrine.
 Such follow him as shall be register'd. 335
 Part good par bad; of bad the longer scroll:
 Whose foul idolatries, and other faults

Heap'd

Heap'd to the popular sum, will so incense
 God, as to leave them, and expose their land,
 Their city, his temple, and his holy ark, 340
 With all his sacred things, a scorn and prey
 To that proud city, whose high walls thou saw'st
 Left in confusion; Babylon thence call'd.
 There in captivity he lets them dwell
 The space of seventy years: then brings them back, 345
 Remembring mercy, and his cov'nant sworn
 To David, stablish'd as the days of heav'n.
 Return'd from Babylon, by leave of kings
 Their lords, whom God dispos'd, the House of God
 They first re-edify: and for a while 350
 In mean estate live moderate: till grown
 In wealth and multitude, factious they grow;
 But first, among the priests dissention springs;
 Men who attend the altar, and should most
 Endeavour peace: their strife pollution brings 355
 Upon the Temple itself: at last they seize
 The sceptre, and regard not David's sons:
 Then lose it to a stranger, that the true
 Anointed king Messiah might be born
 Barr'd of his right: yet at his birth a star 360
 Unseen before in heav'n proclaims him come,
 And guides the eastern Sages, who inquire
 His place, to offer incense, myrrh and gold:
 His place of birth a solemn Angel tells
 To simple shepherds keeping watch by night: 365
 They gladly thither haste, and by a choir
 Of squadron'd Angels hear his carol sung. |
 A Virgin is his mother, but his sire
 The pow'r of the most High! He shall ascend
 The throne hereditary, and bound his reign 370
 With earth's wide bounds, his glory with the heav'ns.
 He ceas'd, discerning Adam with such joy
 Surcharg'd, as had, like grief, been dew'd in tears,
 Without the vent of words; which these he breath'd.

O prophet of glad tidings, finisher of all, 375
 Of utmost hope! now clearly understand,
 What oft my steadiest thoughts have search'd in vain:
 Why our great expectations should be call'd
 The feed of woman's Virgin Mother, hail long said of
 High in the love of Heaven! Yet from my loins 380
 Thou shalt proceed, and from thy womb the Son
 Of God, most High; for God with Man unites.
 Needs must the serpent now his capital bruise
 Expect with mortal pain; say, where and when
 Their fight, what stroke shall bruise the victor's heel? 385
 To whom thus Michael: Dream not of their fight,
 As of a duel, or the local wounds: Of head or heel
 Of head or heel: not therefore joins the Son
 Manhood to God-head; with more strength to foil
 Thy enemy: nor so is overcome 390
 Satan, whose fall from Heaven, a deadlier bruise!
 Disabled not to give thee thy death's wound,
 Which he, who comes thy Saviour, shall rectify,
 Not by destroying Satan, but his works,
 In thee and in thy seed. Nor can this be 395
 But by fulfilling that which thou didst want,
 Obedience to the law of God, impos'd
 On penalty of death, and suffering death;
 The penalty to thy transgression due;
 And due to theirs which out of thine will grow: 400
 So only can high Justice rest appeas'd.
 The law of God exact he shall fulfil
 Both by obedience and by love: though love
 Alone fulfill the law: thy punishment
 He shall indure, by coming in the flesh 405
 To a reproachful life; and cursed death;
 Proclaiming life to all who shall believe
 In his redemption; and that his obedience
 Imputed, becomes theirs by faith; his merits
 To save them, not their own, tho' legal works. 410
 For this he shall live hated, be blasphem'd

Seis'd

Seis'd on by force, judg'd, and for death condemn'd,
 A shameful and accurs'd nail'd to the cross;
 By his own nation; slain for bringing life;
 But to the cross he nails thy enemies;
 The law that is against thee, and the sins
 Of all mankind; with him there crucify'd,
 Never to hurt them more who rightly trust
 In this his satisfaction. So he dies,
 But soon revives; death over him no pow'r
 Shall long usurp: ere the third dawning light
 Return, the stars of morn shall see him rise
 Out of his grave, fresh as the dawning light,
 The ransom paid, which man from death redeems,
 His death for man, as many as offer'd life
 Neglect not, and the benefit embrace
 By faith not void of works. This Gold-like act
 Annuls thy doom; the death thou shouldst have dy'd;
 In sin for ever lost from life: this act
 Shall bruise the head of Satan, crush his strength,
 Defeating Sin and Death, his two main arms,
 And fix far deeper in his head their stings.
 Than temporal death shall bruise the victor's heel;
 Or theirs whom he redeems: a death like sleep,
 A gentle passing to immortal life;
 Nor after resurrection shall he stay
 Longer on earth than certain times to appear
 To his disciples; men who in his life
 Still follow'd him; to them shall leave in charge
 To teach all nations what of him they learn'd
 And his salvation; them who shall believe
 Baptizing in the profluent stream, the sign
 Of washing them from guilt of sin to life
 Pure, and in mind prepar'd, if so befall,
 For death, like that which the Redeemer dy'd,
 All nations they shall teach: for from that day
 Not only to the sons of Abraham's loins
 Salvation shall be preach'd; but to the sons

Of Abraham's faith wherever thro' the world:
 So in his seed all nations shall be blest. 450
 Then to the heav'n of heav'ns shall he ascend
 With victory, triumphing through the air
 Over his foes and thine; there shall surprise
 The serpent, Prince of air, and drag in chains
 Thro' all his realm, and there confounded leave: 455
 Then enter into glory, and resume
 His seat at God's right hand, exalted high
 Above all names in Heav'n: and thence shall come,
 When this world's dissolution shall be ripe,
 With glory and pow'r to judge both quick and dead:
 To judge th' unfaithful dead, but to reward
 His faithful, and receive them into bliss;
 Whether in heav'n or earth: for then the earth
 Shall all be Paradise, far happier place.
 Than this of Eden, and far happier days. 465

So spake th' Arch-Angel Michael, then paus'd,
 As at the world's great period: and our fire,
 Replete with joy and wonder, thus reply'd.

O goodness infinite! goodness immense!
 That all this good of evil shall produce, 470
 And evil turn to good! more wonderful
 Than that which by creation first brought forth
 Light out of darkness! Full of doubt I stand,
 Whether I should repent me now of sin
 By me done and occasion'd; or rejoice 475
 Much more, that much more good thereof shall spring
 To God more glory, more good-will to men
 From God, and over wrath grace shall abound.
 But say, if our Deliverer up to Heav'n
 Must reascend, what will betide the few 480
 His faithful, left among th' unfaithful herd,
 The enemies of truth? Who then shall guide
 His people, who defend? will they not deal
 Worse with his followers, than with him they dealt?
 Be sure they will, said th' Angels; but from Heav'n
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He to his own a Comforter will send,
 The promise of the Father: Who shall dwell
 His Spirit within them; and the law of faith
 Working thro' love, upon their hearts shall write,
 To guide them in all truth; and also arm
 With spiritual armour, able to resist
 Satan's assaults, and quench his fiery darts:
 What man can do against them, not afraid,
 Though to the death; against such cruelties
 With inward consolations recompens'd;
 And oft supported so as shall amaze
 Their proudest persecutors: for the Spirit
 Pour'd first on his Apostles, whom he sends
 To evangelize the Nations; then on all
 Baptiz'd, shall them with wondrous gifts induce
 To speak all tongues, and do all miracles,
 As did their Lord before them. Thus they win
 Great numbers of each nation to receive
 With joy the tidings brought from Heav'n: at length
 Their Ministry perform'd, and race well run,
 Their doctrine and their story written left,
 They die. But in their room, as they forewarn,
 Wolves shall succeed for teachers, grievous wolves!
 Who all the sacred mysteries of Heav'n,
 To their own vile advantages shall turn,
 Of lucre and ambition; and the truth
 With superstitions and traditions taint,
 Left only in those written records pure,
 Though not but by the Spirit understood,
 Then shall they seek to avail themselves of names,
 Places, and titles; and with these to join
 Secular pow'r, though feigning still to act
 By spiritual: to themselves appropriating
 The Spirit of God, promis'd alike and giv'n,
 To all believers: and from that pretence
 Spiritual laws by carnal pow'r shall force
 On every conscience; laws which none shall find

Left them inroll'd; or what the Spirit within
 Shall on the heart engrave. What will they then
 But force the Spirit of grace itself, and bind 525
 His consort liberty? what, but unbuild
 His living temples, built by faith to stand,
 Their own faith, not another's? for on earth
 Who against faith and conscience can be heard
 Infallible? Yet many will presume; 530
 Whence heavy persecution shall arise
 On all who in the worship persevere
 Of spirit and truth: the rest, far greater part,
 Will deem in outward rites and specious forms
 Religion satisfy'd: truth shall retire 535
 Bestuck with slanderous darts; and works of faith
 Rarely be found. So shall the world go on,
 To good malignant, to bad men benign;
 Under her own weight groaning; till the day
 Appear of respiration to the just, 540
 And vengeance to the wicked: at return
 Of Him so lately promis'd to thy aid,
 The Woman's Seed; obscurely then foretold,
 Now amplier known thy Saviour, and thy Lord;
 Last in the clouds from Heav'n to be reveal'd, 545
 In glory of the Father, to dissolve
 Satan with his perverted world; then raise
 From the conflagrant mass, purg'd and refin'd,
 New Heav'ns, new Earth, ages of endless date,
 Founded in righteousness, and peace, and love, 550
 To bring forth fruits, joy, and eternal bliss.
 He ended, and thus Adam last reply'd.
 How soon hath thy prediction, Seer blest!
 Measur'd this transient world, the race of time,
 Till time stand fix'd? Beyond is all abyss, 555
 Eternity, whose end no eye can reach!
 Greatly instructed I shall hence depart,
 Greatly in peace of thought, and have my fill
 Of knowledge, what this vessel can contain,

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Beyond which was my folly to aspire 560
 Henceforth I learn, that to obey is best;
 And love with fear the only God; to walk
 As in his presence, ever to observe
 His providence, and on him sole depend,
 Merciful over all his works, with good 565
 Still overcoming evil; and by small
 Accomplishing great things: by things deem'd weak
 Subverting worldly strong, and worldly wise
 By simply meek: that suffering for truth's sake
 Is fortitude to highest victory,
 And to the faithful Death the gate of Life;
 Taught this by his example whom I now 570
 Acknowledge my Redeemer ever blest.

To whom thus also th' Angel last reply'd:
 This having learn'd, thou hast attain'd the sum
 Of wisdom; hope no higher, though all the stars
 Thou knew'st by name, and all th' ethereal pow'rs,
 All secrets of the deep, all nature's works,
 Or works of God in Heav'n, air, earth, or sea,
 And all the riches of this world enjoy'dst,
 And all the rule, one empire; only add 580
 Deeds to thy knowledge answerable; add faith;
 Add virtue, patience, temperance add love,
 By name to come call'd Charity, the soul
 Of all the rest, then wilt thou not be loath
 To leave this Paradise, but shalt possess 585
 A Paradise within thee, happier far.
 Let us descend now therefore from this top
 Of speculation, for the hour precise
 Exacts our parting hence: and see the guards
 By me incamp'd on yonder hill, expect 590
 Their motion; at whose front a flaming sword
 In signal of remove, waves fiercely round
 We may no longer stay: go! waken Eve
 Her also I with gentle dreams have calm'd,
 Portending good, and all her spirits compos'd 595

To meek submission: thou at season fit
 Let her with thee partake what thou hast heard:
 Chiefly what may concern her faith to know,
 The great deliverance by her seed to come, 600
 For by the woman's seed, on all mankind
 That ye may live, which will be many days,
 Both in one faith unanimous, though sad,
 With cause for evils past, yet much more chear'd
 With meditation on the happy end. 605

He ended, and they both descend the hill:
 Descended, Adam to the bow'r where Eve
 Lay sleeping ran before, but found her wak'd,
 And thus with words not sad she him receiv'd.

Whence thou return'st, and whither went'st, I know;
 For God is also in sleep, and dreams advise;
 Which he hath sent propitious, some great good
 Presaging, since with sorrow and heart's distress
 Wearied I fell asleep: but now lead on!

In me is no delay; with thee to go, 615
 Is to stay here; without thee here to stay,
 Is to go hence unwilling: thou to me
 Art all things under Heav'n, all places thou,
 Who for my wilful crime art banish'd hence.
 This further consolation yet secure 620
 I carry hence; though all by me is lost,
 Such favor I unworthy am vouchsaf'd,
 By me the promis'd seed shall all restore.

So spake our mother Eve; and Adam heard
 Well pleas'd, but answer'd not: for now too nigh 625
 Th' Arch-Angel stood; and from the other hill
 To their fix'd station, all in bright array
 The Cherubim descended; on the ground
 Gliding meteorous, as ev'ning mist
 Ris'n from a river, o'er the marsh glides; 630
 And gathers ground fast at the lab'rer's heel
 Homeward returning. High in front advanc'd
 The brandish'd sword of God before them blaz'd;

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Fierce as a comet; which with torrid heat,
 And vapors as the Libyan air adust, 635
 Began to parch that temperate clime: whereat
 In either hand the hast'ning Angel caught
 Our ling'ring parents, and to th' eastern gate
 Led them direct; and down the cliff as fast
 To the subjected plain; then disappear'd. 640
 They looking back, all th' eastern side beheld
 Of Paradise, so late their happy seat!
 Way'd over by that flaming brand; the gate
 With dreadful faces throng'd and fiery arms.
 Some natural tears they dropt, but wip'd them soon;
 The world was all before them, where to chuse
 Their place of rest, and Providence their guide.
 They, hand in hand, with wand'ring steps and slow,
 Through Eden took their solitary way.

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